

# THE TIMES

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## UN arms inspector facing backlash

By James Bone in New York and Michael Binyon, Diplomatic Editor

RICHARD BUTLER, the sometimes abrasive Australian who heads the United Nations weapons inspectorate, may end up as the first Western casualty of the Anglo-American airstrikes on Iraq.

As the Security Council gathered yesterday on what diplomats dubbed "the morning after", several governments called for a fundamental overhaul of the UN Special Commission (Unscm) that has conducted an aggressive eight-year effort to find Baghdad's hidden weapons of mass destruction.

Their meeting came as Britain yesterday launched a diplomatic assault on foreign ministers around the world to win support for a postwar policy of containing Saddam Hussein.

and in his report to the UN Mr Butler conceded: "In statistical terms, the majority of the inspections of facilities and sites under the ongoing monitoring system were carried out with Iraq's co-operation."

The report named six locations where, Mr Butler said, the authorities made conditions which showed that Iraq did not provide "the full co-operation it promised on 14 November 1998".

When asked about Mr Butler's future, Kofi Annan, the UN Secretary-General, said: "That is a question I would prefer not to answer today. You have heard all the discussions going on — several governments saying we need a new structure, we need a new inspection mechanism. I don't know what that means, and I don't know what kind of structure they have in mind."

Russia is calling for a meeting of Unscm's 21-member advisory board next month to reconsider the organisation's role. France is also proposing that Unscm be reformed, which is really something which is really professional," Alain Dejammet, France's UN Ambassador, said.

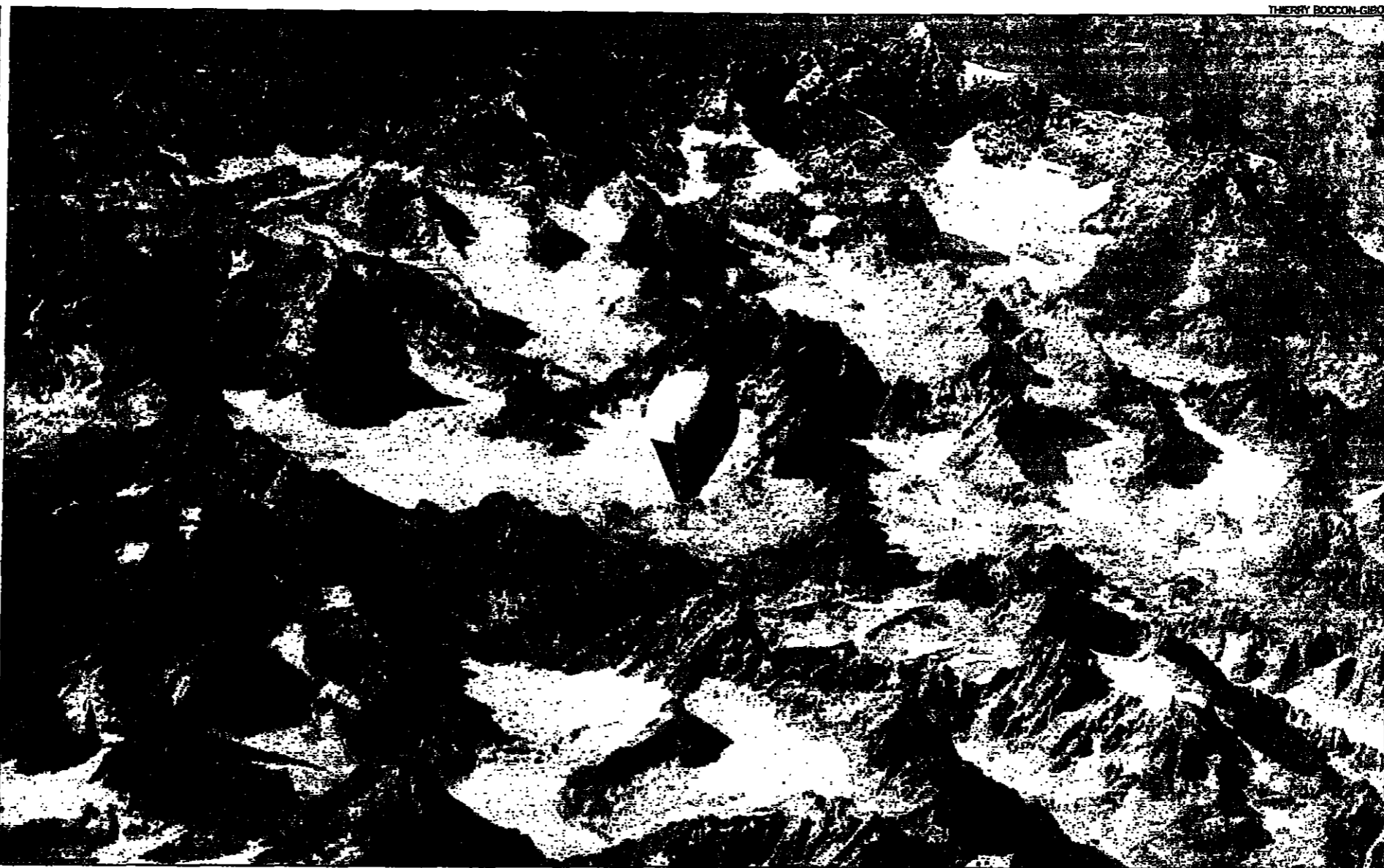
Mr Cook said Britain had received "enormous support" in Europe, with many industries and governments agreeing with his analysis of the threat posed by Saddam.

Yesterday during talks in London with Joschka Fischer, the German Foreign Minister, he spelt out proposals for increased European Union humanitarian aid to Iraq and a new oil-for-food programme to ensure that more Iraqi oil earnings are spent on food.

Insisting that Britain had already formulated a postwar diplomatic strategy, he said this could not have begun during a military campaign. But now Britain would try to build a consensus for isolating Iraq and enforcing sanctions while tackling the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people.

The flurry of phone calls included those to Paris, Rome, Bonn, Washington, Moscow and The Hague. They follow grumblings in Europe that foreign capitals were not properly informed of the bombing campaign and widespread denunciation of Britain by Muslim leaders.

On Sunday Mr Cook telephoned Karzai, Kharrazi, the Foreign Minister of Iran, which currently holds the presidency of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference. Mr Kharrazi told Mr Cook of the Muslim world's "extreme concern" at the desecration of Ramadan by the airstrikes. Yesterday he spoke to Amr Moussa, the Egyptian Foreign Minister.



Key conquest: the Ico Global Challenger flies through the Himalayas at the border of Pakistan and India yesterday. But success now may depend on Chinese politicians

## 'Don't stop me' Branson begs China

By Helen Rumble

RICHARD BRANSON was heading last night towards the heart of forbidden northern China, in defiance of the Chinese, and risking catastrophe in his attempt to fly non-stop around the world in a balloon.

The challenge of dodging north of Everest was dwarfed by his 11th hour pleas to get the Chinese to change their minds. The Virgin tycoon was speaking to "any diplomat that moves" from 30,000 ft up in the Ico Global Challenge cockpit, said Mike Kendrick, the

project director. Tony Blair, Sir Edward Heath and the Foreign Office were also trying every channel to prevent the Chinese forcing a landing. China's refusal to give permission to fly through its airspace ended the round-the-world hopes of a rival balloon team in February.

"We're effectively in an emergency situation," said Mr Branson, as he drifted above the Himalayas. "We did not choose to go over the Himalayas or this way into China."

The first time the balloon could land would be daybreak, on the Tibetan plateau, one of the most inhospitable and remote places on earth. Although the balloon crew has arctic rations, the barren desert is too high and windy for helicopters to reach. "The thought of asking them to land horrifies me especially there," said Mr Kendrick.

The crisis began at 8am yesterday morning, when China withdrew their permission for the balloon to fly into their country north of 26 degrees latitude. Mr Branson, and his co-pilots Steve Fossett and Per Lindstrand had permission to fly across southern China, but Operation Desert Fox last weekend

meant they had to head north suddenly to avoid Iran and Iraq. This has forced them to set another record in their attempt to circumnavigate the world: becoming the first balloon to fly over the treacherous Himalayas in the complete night darkness. A daylight crossing was first achieved in 1991 by Andy Elson.

Mr Branson said: "It was absolutely exhilarating crossing the Himalayas in the sunshine. I have never seen anything so beautiful. But now it is dark and ice is forming on the top of the balloon as we head for Everest."



### INSIDE

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Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, placed telephone calls with foreign ministers around the world in an attempt to ward off the widespread criticism of the airstrikes on Iraq.

At the same time diplomats and security officials in the Gulf expressed fears yesterday that revenge for the air raids on Iraq could begin with terrorist attacks on opponents of Saddam living in Britain.

Kuwait officials said they had already stepped up security to guard Britons in Kuwait and revealed that terrorist threats were made yesterday to its embassy and offices in London.

In New York, Britain and the United States repeated their strong support for Mr Butler, who struggled off calls for his resignation and denied that he had colluded with the United States over the timing of his report. But UN officials said it was unclear if they could withstand a groundswell of criticism of Mr Butler.

The Iraqi team the Unscm team was allowed access to more than 400 sites.

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### Octuplets well

The world's only surviving octuplets were in critical condition in a hospital in Houston, Texas. They were born over the last two weeks, ten weeks premature, and ranged in weight between 11oz and 1lb 10z. Page 3

### Markets rally

A Wall Street rally and an IMF report cheered the London stock market, with the FTSE 100 closing up 134 points at 5876. At one point the Dow Jones index in New York broke through the 9000 mark. Page 21

### Israel election

The Israeli Knesset voted overwhelmingly for early elections after a day during which Benjamin Netanyahu, the Prime Minister, faced attacks from left and right over his decision to freeze the Wye peace accord with the Palestinians. Page 12

## Lockerbie's 270 are remembered

By Alan Hamilton

MEMORIAL services in Scotland, England and the United States yesterday marked the tenth anniversary of the Lockerbie air disaster. At the same time America said it would seek "additional measures" if Libya does not hand over two men suspected of the bombing by February.

As relatives and friends honoured the memory of the 270 who died when PanAm flight 103 was blown to pieces over the Scottish Borders, victims' representatives expressed concern that the Anglo-US airstrikes on Iraq could affect the handover of the suspects, whom Britain and the US want tried in The Netherlands before Scottish judges.

Last night the prospect of the suspects being brought to justice receded further when Colonel Muammar Gaddafi called for them to be tried by an international court that included Libyan judges. In an interview broadcast on Dutch television, the Libyan leader

## NHS sex change allowed

By Frances Gibb

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

THREE transsexuals may have their sex-change operations on the National Health Service after winning a High Court test case.

They won a landmark ruling against North West Lancashire Health Authority's decision not to pay for operations, which costing some £7,000-£9,000 each, which medical specialists say are crucial to completing their male-to-female transformation.

Mr Justice Hilder, at the High Court in London, held that the authority's decision was "unlawful and irrational" and taken without considering the "proper treatment of a recognised illness". Miss A, 21, Miss D and Miss G, both 50, were refused surgery after it was decided that none had shown an "overriding clinical need" for treatment.

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## Scruffy vicar with heart of gold leaves £5m

By Ruth Gleedhill  
RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

A FORMER vicar who was the son of a baronet but lived on a council estate and drove a battered old van has left more than £5 million in his will.

The Rev Sir James Roll, Vicar of the rundown parish of St John's, Dagenham, Essex, from 1958 until 1983, was known for his clerical collar that was two sizes too large, his ill-fitting suits and generally shabby demeanour. He never married and his only companion at the end was a terrier, Lucy.

But when he was not preaching or

visiting parishioners on the desolate council estates that once were in his care, he was secretly studying the stock market and making shrewd investments in insurance schemes.

Despite his background, Sir James made most of his fortune himself. He kept it secret from nearly everyone who knew him until he died in February this year, aged 87.

Lynn Foster, a friend and former churchwarden of St John's, said: "I thought we would have to raise money for his funeral, so I was stunned to hear how much he left. I knew he had some money, but he invested it wisely

in insurance schemes and that must have been his secret."

The Rev Roger Gayler, of nearby St Mark's Church, said: "He was the archetypal scruffy old vicar, with a heart of gold. His dog collar didn't fit, his mac had certainly seen better days, he drove a battered old van and lived in an ordinary house on a council estate."

"He wasn't mean: money just didn't matter to him. He was interested in other people, not in himself. When I came here in 1975 he was already approaching retirement. He had this enormous, cathedral-style church but a declining population."

Sir James, whose estate was valued at £5,387,216, left £200,000 to a variety of children's, homeless and animal charities; most went to his elderly step-sister and other distant relations. He also left £10,000 to St Clement's Church, Leigh-on-Sea, where he had a home. He used to take deprived children there on holiday and he spent his later years there.

The Rev Stephen Jones, Rector of St Clement's, said: "James was a kind and generous person, fond of children and animals. Heaven's above, we had no idea he had so much money — it was obviously not important to him."

# Rail travellers face huge disruption

A power struggle for union posts could lead to strikes, reports Arthur Leathley

RAIL travellers are facing industrial action on several fronts as hard-line union members press for greater militancy across the rail network.

An intense struggle for power has broken out at the two main rail unions, with members of Arthur Scargill's Socialist Labour Party leading demands for radical change.

Campaigning in key union elections is expected to lead to further industrial action in the new year and the threat of more widespread disruption later.

Left-wing activists are pressing the unions to flex their muscle in disputes with London Underground, maintenance firms and some of the busiest train operators, including Connex and Virgin Rail.

London Underground will today seek a High Court injunction

against the RMT, the biggest rail union, unless it calls off two 24-hour strikes starting on New Year's Eve and January 3.

The Socialist Labour Party scored its first significant victory this year in winning the leadership of the train drivers' union, Aslef. Dave Rix, its candidate, ousted Lew Adams, the moderate general secretary.

Now Mr Scargill's party has its sights on controlling the 60,000-strong RMT, the most militant rail union, which is staging elections for two of its top three posts.

Senior left-wingers are looking to win power on the back of a pledge to scupper the sell-off of London Underground and to win huge pay in-

creases for thousands of rail workers.

Bob Crow, an SLP member, is the increasingly powerful assistant general secretary of the union and is tipped to become general secretary when Jimmy Knapp steps down. Greg Tucker, a hard-line leftwinger who in the past has called on union members to back SLP candidates, has also been nominated for the top post.

Mr Scargill's supporters are now pressing for Pat Sikorsky, another prominent SLP member, to take over the other assistant general secretary post in elections next month.

Mr Sikorsky, a former London Underground guard, is backed by hard-line branches which are press-

ing for radical change in the union's dealings with train operators, London Transport and railway maintenance companies. He will challenge the moderate Vernon Hince, who currently holds the post.

Mr Sikorsky accused the Labour Party of "turning its back" on the rail industry with its plans to "privatise" the Tube and return to public ownership.

John Prescott, before the election, was saying he was going to buy back Railtrack. He was going, basically, to take the railways back into public ownership and under public control," he said.

"Not only has he failed to do that with the main line railways, he is going to privatise London Under-

ground. All the talk and all the bluster from John Prescott about extra regulations for the railways has ended with nothing."

Militant trade union activists argue that next year will be crucial to the future of unions in the rail industry. They are pressing rail workers to take action in protest at job losses and moves to extend private running of the industry as it moves further into the private sector.

Mr Knapp is also under personal attack. In a recent edition of the extreme-left *Socialist Outlook* newspaper he was accused of allowing a "continual slow decline in the union's fortunes rather than upset his base in the bureaucracy."

Mr Tucker wrote recently that the

elections were crucial to the RMT's future: "How the Left responds will determine the future of the union, even its survival, for years to come."

Senior moderate figures in the RMT fear that the party could be taken over by the Left because of the lethargy of many members. Mr Rix won the leadership of Aslef on a turnout of under 50 per cent and the RMT leadership is trying to whip up interest among non-militant members.

Mr Sikorsky recently called an "urgent meeting" of all RMT members of the SLP, believed to number up to 100. A letter, written on SLP paper and signed by him, said it was to "discuss the current situation in the union and in the industry". The letter added: "Your discretion regarding this letter and the meeting would be appreciated."

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Ministers 'go easy' on dictators

The Government has been accused of paying trade ahead of human rights in a highly critical report by the all-party Foreign Affairs Select Committee. The report said that ministers promoted human rights less forcefully in countries in which Britain had major trade interests, such as China and Indonesia. It also expressed concern about continuing arms sales to regimes under which there had been human-rights abuses.

Donald Anderson, the Labour chairman of the committee said: "The temptation is to be strong [only] in weak countries. Indonesia was clearly a country where there were substantial projects, including arms purchases, in prospect."

### Wildlife fears

Ministers are to push for tough new laws to protect wildlife sites after claims that increasing amounts of land are being developed or damaged. Environmental pressure groups said that the Government had failed to implement any measures to protect wildlife since it took office.

### Pinochet appeal

Lord Lamont of Lerwick, the former Chancellor, urged the Home Secretary to release General Augusto Pinochet temporarily from house arrest so that he could celebrate Mass with his family at Christmas. A spokesman for Jack Straw said that bail conditions were a matter for the courts.

### Welsh contest

Alun Michael, the Welsh Secretary, is to contest the Mid and West Wales seat for the Welsh assembly in his campaign to become its leader. His leadership rival, Rhodri Morgan, Labour MP for Cardiff West, has already been selected to fight the Cardiff West seat for the assembly.

### Immigrants fine

Lorry drivers will be fined £2,000 for every illegal immigrant they carry into the country, the Government confirmed yesterday. Mike O'Brien, the Immigration Minister, said that almost 8,000 people had entered Britain this year hidden in the backs of lorries and other vehicles.

### MP lists spoon

Ann Widdecombe, the Shadow Health Secretary, has declared a bent spoon in the Commons' Register of Members' Interests. It is made of stainless steel, but has a potential worth of £17,000 because it was lent by Uri Geller and given to the Tory MP when they met on *Call My Bluff*.

# Corruption by officers could cost Yard £50m

By Stewart Tendler, Crime Correspondent

THE Government faces a bill of up to £50 million in costs and compensation for miscarriages of justice uncovered by corruption investigations.

Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, was given the figure by Sir Paul Condon, the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, and John Stevens, his deputy and head of the anti-corruption drive, after a confidential review into the problems of tackling corruption in London.

Their report was drawn up to help the Home Office to budget for the heaviest sums the Yard might face in the early years of the next century. It is based on the possibility that 200 cases being investigated in "Operation Stain" will all result in quashed convictions.

Details of Home Office compensation in cases of miscarriage are confidential but are believed to include awards of up to £20,000 for each year in jail. If all 200 cases were reversed, it would cost the Yard at least £4 million in compensation for each year that the convicted criminals had spent in jail and on remand in custody. In addition, police would face substantial bills for the costs of the original prosecutions and work by defence lawyers on appeals.

Many of the allegations involve the fabrication of evidence, such as planting weapons, and in at least one case

tampering with scientific evidence. Senior officers acknowledge that the full picture of corruption may take several years to emerge.

Five possible miscarriages of justice have already been uncovered. The first will reach the Court of Appeal next month. The appeal by George Ellis, 38, jailed for 14 years last year for robbery, is not expected to be challenged by the Crown Prosecution Service. He has been released on bail.

Another case involves Abraham Shakes, 28, who was released on bail yesterday and given leave to appeal. He is serving eight years for an armed robbery case involving Keith Garner, a former detective who last month pleaded guilty to corruption.

Forty-five suspended officers and 15 serving officers face charges. Other former officers have been charged or are under investigation.

In 1996-97, the last period for which figures are available, the Yard paid out more than £2.4 million in damages to settle claims including assault and false imprisonment.

Scotland Yard said last night that miscarriage cases were still being reviewed and "it is not possible at this stage to put an accurate figure on any potential costs. The worst-case scenario is nothing more than speculation."



George Robertson, the Defence Secretary, met the 1st Battalion The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders in Portadown yesterday

# Maze leave for 170 at Christmas

By Martin Fletcher

MORE than 170 terrorists, including infamous killers, will be allowed out of the Maze for ten days' Christmas leave tomorrow, leaving barely 100 prisoners in a jail that held 500 as recently as this summer.

Those being allowed home include Michael Stone, who killed three republicans at Milltown Cemetery; Johnny Adair, the loyalist who masterminded a campaign of terror in which more than 20 Roman Catholics were murdered; and

Patrick Magee, the Brighton bomber. Another who may get out is Sean Kelly, the IRA man jailed for life for the Shankill Road fish-shop bomb in which nine Protestants died. Kelly's target was Adair, whose Ulster Freedom Fighters met in a room above the shop.

South of the border, officials said that the four-man Balcombe Street gang, which terrorised London in the 1970s, is likely to be allowed home for Christmas.

Some observers saw the releases as a further inducement to the IRA to make

the downpayment of weaponry being demanded by Unionists as a condition of Sinn Fein entering Northern Ireland's new executive.

The Maze is likely to be as empty this Christmas as at any time since it was opened as an internment camp in 1971. 25 terrorists have been freed under the Good Friday accord. Northern Ireland's Prison Service in any case operates a generous home-leave scheme, arguing that it helps inmates to maintain family links and reduces the chances of reoffending.



Kelly, fish-shop bomber may be allowed home

# Say 'bonjour' to the new face of rugby

By Mark Souster

THIERRY LACROIX, who two years ago turned down a film role as the villain in a French thriller, is to be the new face of domestic rugby on British terrestrial television.

Lacroix, 31, the former France player, has been chosen to present a Channel 4 magazine programme that begins on January 2 and that will run, initially, for 22 weeks.

According to Neil Duncanson, managing director of Chrysalis Television, makers of the programme, Lacroix is "the Eric Cantona of rugby — a real character, bright and intelligent, someone who will bring a fresh approach to coverage of the sport". Lacroix got the job after Jeremy Guscott turned it down.

The hour-long programme, called *Inside Rugby with Thierry Lacroix*, will be shown on Saturdays at 10am and is intended to attract a younger audience without alienating the



Lacroix keeping in touch

sport's traditional viewer. The show will be more of a review and preview than its predecessors. *Rugby Special* on BBC and Channel 5's *Rugby Express*. The BBC is resurrecting its own highlights coverage in *Sunday Grandstand* in the new year.

Lacroix, one of four former France internationals now playing club rugby in the Allied Dunbar Premiership 1, in-

tends combining his career at Harlequins, for whom he expects to play for another four years, with his new role. "I like to do something different: in front of the camera I don't feel the pressure — perhaps because I am used to kicking," he said.

"This is a new challenge which keeps in touch with rugby. I had to turn down the film part because I was playing rugby in Natal at the time, but the producers felt that with my broken nose I would be perfect for the part of a gangster!"

Lacroix rejected an offer to join a French station in a full-time capacity in 2000 because of his desire to settle permanently in England.

Under Mark Sharman, the new head of sport, Channel 4 intends to increase its mainstream sports coverage and sees long-term potential in rugby. Mr Duncanson said: "Channel 4 have got ambitions for the sport. This is a foot in the door."

# Green check on showroom cars

By Nick Nuttall, Environment Correspondent

ALL new cars sold in Britain will be required to carry "green" labels showing how environmentally friendly they are, under an agreement made in Brussels yesterday.

The Europe-wide scheme is aimed at giving consumers reliable information on fuel efficiency and the levels of carbon dioxide they emit. Michael Meacher, the Environment Minister, said that it was up to each member state to decide how detailed labels would be.

He emphasised that those in Britain needed to be subject to a code so that potential buyers were not merely given glossy claims by manufacturers. "We do not want them to be public relations exercises for the car companies. They will need to be independently verifiable," he said.

The scheme, which will come into force in Britain next year, is part of a range of agreements signed by Europe's environment ministers to improve

air quality and to combat global warming.

A 30 per cent cut in particulates, tiny microscopic flecks of soot mainly produced by diesel vehicles, was agreed for lorries and buses by 2000. A further 80 per cent cut in this form of pollution, which is linked to breathing difficulties and heart attacks, was agreed to come into force in 2008.

Oxides of nitrogen, which contribute to smogs, will be cut by nearly a third in heavy goods vehicles by 2000, and hydrocarbons and carbon monoxide by 20 per cent by the same date.

Mr Meacher said: "Slashing particulate emissions by 90 per cent will help people who are particularly sensitive to air pollution, including those with asthma and the elderly."

Friends of the Earth welcomed the agreements but said that more needed to be done to cut traffic levels.

# The hi-tech glasses that put Branson to sleep

By Nigel Hawkes, Science Editor

RICHARD BRANSON is using a hi-tech slumber machine to try to put him to sleep during his round-the-world ballooning attempt.

Pulsed light and sound is fed to his eyes and ears to stimulate the patterns of sleep.

The device, driven by a laptop computer, consists of a pair of glasses fitted with light-emitting diodes and a set of headphones. When they are turned on, the wearer sees a gently pulsing light through closed eyelids, and hears a single tone with beats co-ordinated to the light signals. The idea, says Richard Hanbury, the inventor, is to simulate the natural rhythms of sleep and make it easier to doze off in the 10ft high capsule.

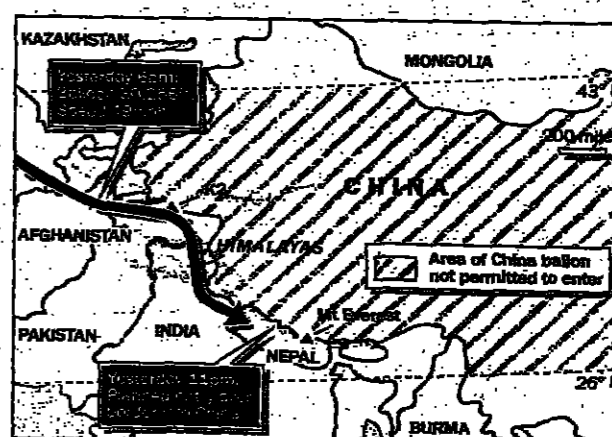
He developed the optical acoustical brainwave trainer, as he calls it, after he was paralysed in a car accident in the Yemen in 1992 and suffered continuous pain. He found

that the pain could be eased by stimulating his brain with the right frequencies: "I developed it because I was forced to."

Mr Branson, he said, did not believe it would work before he tried it at home. "He used it in the house on the Saturday before he left and he

was asleep in six minutes," Mr Hanbury said. "I have been told by the control centre that he had three hours of really good sleep after he used it in the balloon."

The device is still experimental, with no published data to demonstrate its effectiveness.



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This week the children of Knaresborough are celebrating the 150th Anniversary of their station as well as Christmas. [www.railtrack.co.uk](http://www.railtrack.co.uk)

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# Doctors praise mother in octuplet ordeal

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN NEW YORK AND NIGEL HAWKES

THE world's only surviving octuplets were in critical but stable condition yesterday in a hospital in Houston, where for two weeks they had been the best-kept secret in Texas.

Neither Nkem Chukwu, mother of the eight, nor her doctors, knew until the first of them was born on December 8 how many more were waiting to come out. When an ultrasound scan revealed seven tiny but healthy fetuses, the news was kept under wraps until their birth on Sunday morning at St Luke's Episcopal Hospital. A team of 30 medical staff, including three doctors, delivered the babies by Caesarean section in 15 frantic minutes, each one being whisked into intensive care at Texas Children's Hospital, where they were on ventilators yesterday.

Their sister, older by 13 days, was also in critical condi-



Brian Kirshon, who delivered the octuplets

tion but breathing by herself. Mrs Chukwu, 27, was praised by her astonished doctors as a model patient who tolerated "extreme conditions" to give her children the best chance of surviving. Having declined the chance to abort one of more of them for the sake of the others, she spent the last 2½ weeks of her pregnancy immobile in bed with her head

tilted toward the floor to relieve the pressure on her cervix. Mrs Chukwu also offered to forgo eating to give the fetuses more room to grow, and was fed intravenously.

Mrs Chukwu had been taking fertility drugs. She conceived triplets last year but lost them midway through her pregnancy. The couple have no other children. "She would go to any lengths to prolong this pregnancy," said Dr Brian Kirshon, who delivered the babies.

The babies born on Sunday were ten weeks premature, ranging in weight from 11oz to 1lb 1oz. The immediate danger is of lung and heart problems, and after that infections. Their hospital stay, expected to last at least two months, will cost about £160,000 each.

"It's really too early to say what the prognosis is," Leonard Weisman, the hospital's head of neonatology services, said. "Several have shown some improvement and several haven't."

But by yesterday doctors were already more optimistic. "We're very hopeful all of the babies will survive, but they're critically ill and we can't say for sure," Paul Savrick said, adding that the survival rate for such tiny infants was now 85 per cent.

Mrs Chukwu, 27, was born in Nigeria, but is a naturalised American whose husband, Lyke, works as a respiratory therapist at a Houston hospital. She could be home by Christmas. Her husband was not present for the deliveries, but has seen the babies since.

The largest multiple birth was nine in Sydney, Australia, in 1971. All the children died. Three other cases of octuplets have been recorded in the past 13 years. In two cases, all the babies died. In 1996, Rosario Clavijo, 31, of Huelva, Spain, lost two of eight fetuses before birth, but then delivered six healthy babies. The octuplets top the record of seven surviving babies born last year to Bobbi and Kerry McCaughey, of Iowa.

## Multiple births can spell disaster

By Dr Thomas Stuttaford

THE greater the number of babies in a pregnancy, the less likely they are to survive those that do are likely to grow up to be physically or mentally damaged. Even twin pregnancies present an increased hazard.

The authoritative book *Multiple Pregnancy*, published by the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, describes higher order multiple pregnancies as the "greatest disaster in this field": the field being assisted conception. What is often hailed as a splendid medical achievement is, in fact, a calamity.

It may not have been possible to prevent so many follicles ripening, but to allow fertilisation to occur after this has happened is regrettable. The true

heroes are the specialists and their staff who care for the babies while they are growing in the womb, the obstetricians who deliver them and the paediatricians who look after them once they are in their incubators.

When a higher order multiple pregnancy does occur, the doctor should discuss openly with the parents the possibility of converting it to one of twins, even though this involves destroying embryos. The lesson to be learnt from this pregnancy is that any woman who takes a drug to stimulate multiple follicular development should be under the care of specialists so that the ovaries may be checked before she attempts to conceive.



Abigail Saxon: raced three times around the Barca bar wearing nothing but her socks

# BBC tears a strip off producer for £100 streak

By Russell Jenkins

A RELIGIOUS programmes producer stripped off at an office Christmas lunch and ran naked around a crowded restaurant in Manchester for a bet.

Abigail Saxon, 34, who works on Radio 4's *Sunday Programme*, was challenged to streak twice around the fashionable Barca bar in Castlefield for £100. To cheers from diners at surrounding tables, she shouted, "This one is for free," as she began a third lap before disappearing into the women's lavatory.

The BBC has launched an investigation into the conduct of staff from the religious programmes department, based at the corporation's Oxford Road headquarters, who attended the team lunch.

The corporation is examining suggestions that Ms Saxon was egged on by a senior executive, David Coombes, an executive producer, who is said to have contributed £70 towards the £100 bet.

Both members of staff, who will learn the result of any disciplinary hearings in the new year, were at work yesterday.

The Rev Ernest Rea, head of the department responsible for programmes including *Everyman*, *Songs of Praise* and *Heart of the Matter*, was said to be "absolutely appalled" by the incident. Mr Rea, who was not at the meal, is said to have "gone ballistic".

Ms Saxon, who lives in Rusholme, Manchester, had been drinking at the lunch last Thursday and shocked her colleagues when she decided to take up the challenge. She went to the lavatory, took off all her clothes except her socks and emerged one leg first shouting, "Here I come."

A member of Barca's staff said: "During the first lap everybody was stunned. Then she went around again and they were all clapping and cheering. It made their day."

"It was just a bit of Christmas fun. You could say it lived the place up. It was pretty crowded at the time. We do

not have any trouble with this so long as it does not happen every day of the week."

Barca, which is partly owned by Mick Hucknall, the Simply Red pop star, is popular with media executives, who enjoy its Mediterranean cuisine and cosmopolitan atmosphere.

The streak was one of the main items of gossip at the BBC studios in the city. One insider said: "You can imagine how everyone is talking about this. If she worked for a department other than the religious one, then it may not have seemed so bad. But she is facing a real problem now and her job could even be on the line because of this."

The BBC spokeswoman insisted that the lunch was a team affair and not a departmental occasion. Staff had paid the bill out of their own pockets. She acknowledged that the mood of the lunch was "exuberant", and added: "It would be wrong to imply it is Ms Saxon and her alone who is being questioned."

Earlier the BBC issued a statement: "A Christmas celebration got seriously out of hand. The BBC would not under any circumstances condone such behaviour. Officials are investigating the matter and will take the appropriate disciplinary action."



Rea: was said to be "absolutely appalled"

## Body of missing girl found

By Russell Jenkins

THE body of the missing toddler Jade Lester has been found by police officers in a black binliner on waste ground on Merseyside.

The body was partially hidden by undergrowth beside a reservoir near the two-year-old girl's home in the Kensington area of Liverpool. Police began a search after her mother Sharon Lester, 22, was discovered beaten and stabbed to death on Saturday.

A 24-year-old man was yesterday charged with the murder of Miss Lester, John Park, an unemployed joiner, also of Kensington, who was further charged with burglary of her home, was remanded in custody.

Police had been hoping that Miss Lester had left her child with a friend or relative. A Home Office pathologist was conducting a post-mortem examination yesterday, but it is believed that the girl died at about the same time as her mother. The couple had not been seen for a week.

Police are still trying to trace the dead child's father, a task made more difficult because Miss Lester did not identify him to her immediate family.

## Saudi nurse is found guilty of theft and fraud

By a Correspondent

ONE of the two British nurses jailed in Saudi Arabia for being an accessory to the murder of an Australian colleague was yesterday found guilty by a Scottish court of theft and fraud.

Lucille McLauchlan, 33, stole £300 from an elderly patient while she was working at Kings Cross Hospital in Dundee in 1996. She also forged references and was found guilty of handling a stolen bank card.

Sheriff Alastair Stewart, at Dundee Sheriff Court, deferred sentence until January 18 for reports.

Although she was found guilty of using the bank card, McLauchlan was acquitted of stealing it while working at Kings Cross Hospital. She was found guilty of using forged references, but cleared of using them to obtain a job in Saudi Arabia.

The court was told that a 2½-minute sequence from a bank security video showed McLauchlan next to a cash machine in Dundee. During the trial, she was unable to tell the

court what she had been doing there. She did not have a account at the branch.

Sheriff Stewart described her actions and the length of time spent at the machine as "highly suspicious". He said: "It is theoretically possible that she may have been doing something else, such as making a balance inquiry, but I suggest that is the sort of fanciful speculation that juries are directed to avoid."

The sheriff described McLauchlan's use of forged references, which she gave to the Speedwell Nurses Recruitment Agency in Dundee, as "a clearly thought-out and planned pattern of deceit with a view to obtaining employment abroad", and said that they contained "untrue statements" and "complete lies".

McLauchlan, who was released earlier this year after spending 17 months in a Saudi prison, appeared under her married name of Ferris, and sat impassively as the verdicts were read out. She and her lawyer refused to comment outside the court.

## Lovers die together at farmhouse

By Adam Fresco

TWO young lovers have been found lying feet apart with gunshot wounds at a farmhouse in Dumfries and Galloway.

The bodies of Peter Elliot, 19, and Catriona Cook, 17, his girlfriend of a year, were discovered early on Sunday at his father's farm three miles outside Sanquhar. Police are not looking for anyone else. Friends said that the two were very much in love and they could not explain why they had apparently taken their own lives.

Catriona was a show-jumper and a regular rider at the annual traditional Dumfries Riding of the Marches ceremony. She hoped to work with horses and was doing a one-year veterinary nursing course at Barry College, Parkgate.

A friend of the family said yesterday: "Catriona was a lovely girl and seemed to be very much in love. She spoke about Peter all the time but there was no talk of marriage. I had met him and I found him a very nice lad. What's happened is absolutely tragic." Peter Elliot and his brother Sandy, 22, lived on the farm with his father. His mother is remarried and lives in Sanquhar.

## Hollywood dresses up a classic

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN NEW YORK

SIR ALEC GUINNESS may have to tell himself that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery: Robin Williams has been mentioned as the leading candidate to reprise Sir Alec's performance in *Kind Hearts and Coronets*, one of the crowning achievements of British comic cinema.

Williams, the star of comedies such as *Mrs Doubtfire*, is the first choice of the director Mike Nichols for a remake of the 1949 Ealing comedy in which Louis Mazzini kills eight distant relatives to become a duke. The original has been called an "hilarious study in the gentle art of murder". In a performance that in-



Guinness as a D'Ascayne, and Williams as Mrs Doubtfire



Guinness as a D'Ascayne, and Williams as Mrs Doubtfire

fluenced Peter Sellers, Sir Alec played Mazzini, and also seven crusty members of the D'Ascayne family who disowned his mother after she ran off with an opera singer.

The remake is the latest instance of Hollywood's feverish plundering of past hits for good ideas - a symptom, most agree, of its inability to come up with new ones - in-

cluding, in the past 18 months, *Psycho*, *Dr Doolittle* and *The Nutty Professor*.

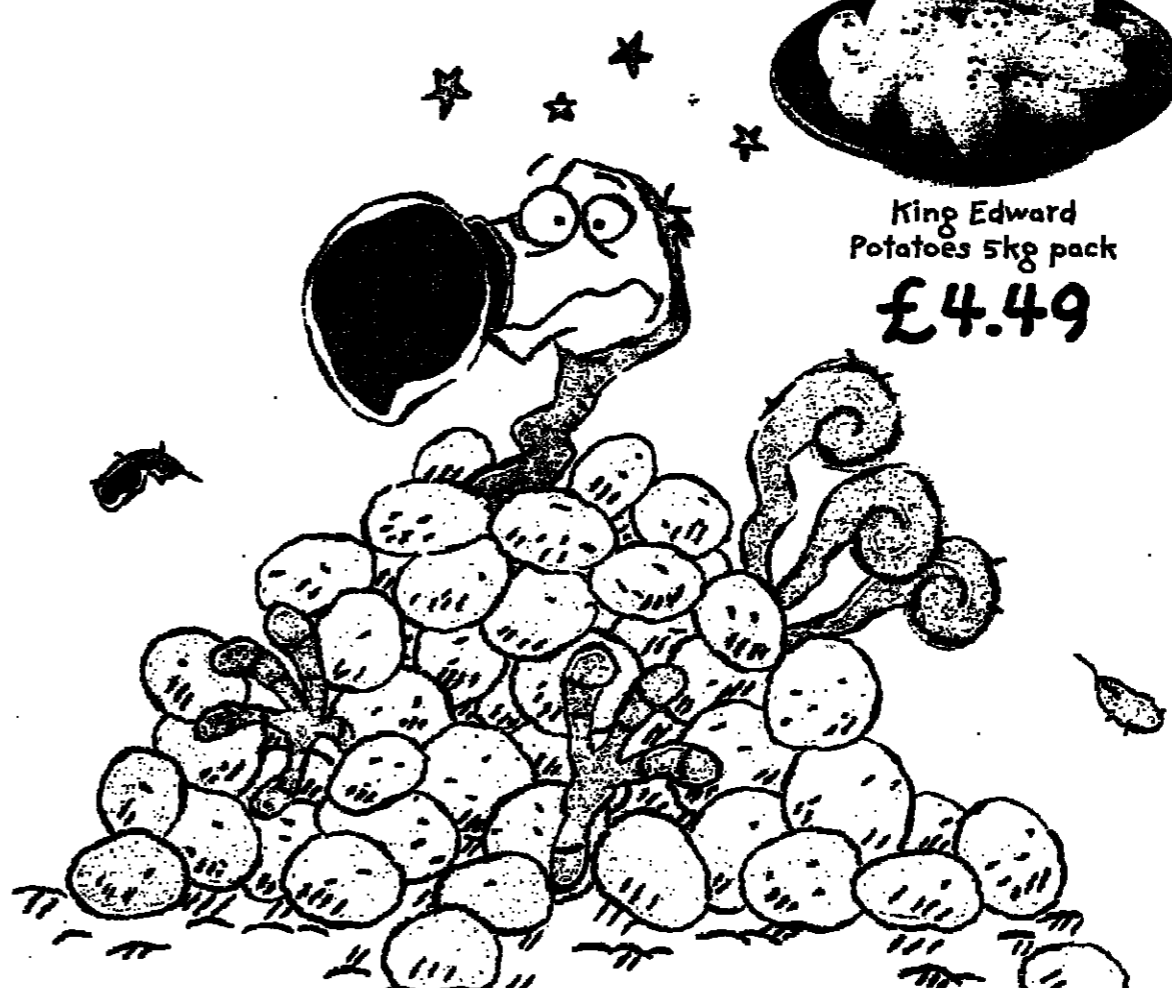
Eddie Murphy's success with multiple roles in *The Nutty Professor* may be behind the plan to cast Williams as Mazzini. Both actors had big hits early in their careers but have lost their edge with audiences - Murphy because of a scandal after he was stopped by police with a transsexual prostitute, Williams because of his sentimentality.

Comedy is on the up in Hollywood. Although the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences seldom recognises comedies, Cameron Diaz has been tipped for an Oscar nomination for her performance in *There's Something About Mary*.

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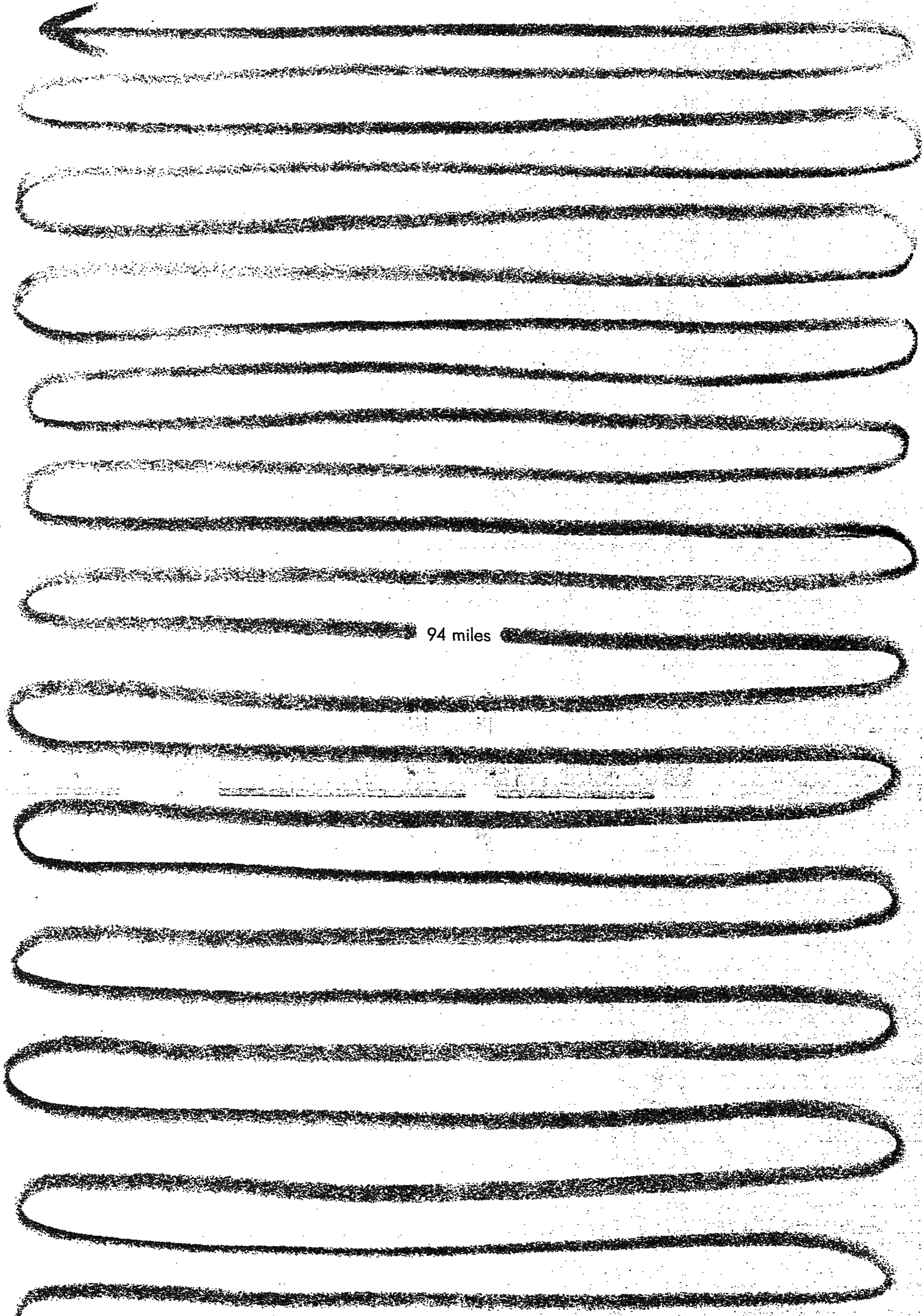


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THE TIMES  
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# Judges let driver sue council for ice crash

By MICHAEL HORSNELL

A MAN who was paralysed when his car skidded on black ice won the right to sue a local authority yesterday for damages of up to £3 million.

Geoffrey Goodes was left a quadriplegic after his car hit a patch of ice and skidded into a bridge on the A267 near Mayfield, East Sussex, in November 1991.

In a case of enormous importance to local authorities, the Court of Appeal ruled by a majority of two to one that East Sussex County Council had failed in its statutory duty as the highway authority.

Mr Goodes blames the council for failing to grit the road quickly enough after weather forecasts had given warning that safety action was necessary.

Recognising the "general public importance" of their ruling on the potential liabilities of local authorities, however, the appeal court judges granted the council leave to appeal to the House of Lords.

Judge Hargrove ruled at the High Court in January that, although Mr Goodes was blameless, the council had not breached its duty under the Highways Act 1980.

Upholding Mr Goodes's appeal, however, Lord Justice Hinchinson accepted his lawyers' argument that "pre-salting" was needed. The judge said that the gritter lorries

should have been sent out at 4am, but did not start work until after 5am. Mr Goodes's accident happened after 7am.

Lord Justice Hinchinson said that the council had failed in its duty to take reasonable steps to ensure that the highway was not dangerous. Lord Justice Morritt agreed that Mr Goodes's appeal be allowed.

In a dissenting judgment, Lord Justice Aldous said that in his view, the original judge had "come to the right decision for the right reasons". The council had sent out its gritting lorries at 5.30am to clear the roads of ice by the start of the "rush-hour" at 7.30am and it could not be said the council had acted unreasonably, he said in his judgment.

There had, he added, been no reason to give the A267 priority over other roads when it came to gritting.

Christopher Wilson-Smith, for the county council, told the judges that their decision would have wide repercussions for all local authorities in terms of assessing their liabilities for breach of statutory duties.

Mr Goodes, whose damages award will have to be assessed at another court hearing if the council loses its appeal to the House of Lords on the issue of liability, was not in court to hear the decision.

# £9.2m award for accident victim

By SUE LAFFEMAN

A MAN whose career was destroyed when he was left almost totally paralysed in his limbs by a car accident was awarded record compensation of more than £9.2 million at the High Court yesterday.

The payout to Martijn Biesheuvel, 27, who is Dutch and lives in Amsterdam, far exceeds the largest previous damages awarded in an English court of £3.9 million. At the time of the accident, in May 1994, Mr Biesheuvel had just completed his final examinations in business administration at Bath University and had been offered a job with an accountancy firm that could have eventually earned him half a million pounds a year.

He and four friends were driving to play football when the Vauxhall Astra they were in smashed into a row of parked vehicles in Bath. Mr Biesheuvel suffered a fracture to his spine that left him a tetraplegic. The driver, Andrew Birrell, and three other passengers suffered minor injuries.

The court accepted that Mr Birrell's negligent driving had caused the accident, which happened when he lost control of the car after overtaking. His insurance company, Eagle Star Insurance, admitted primary liability but disputed the amount of damages.

But Mr Justice Eady said: "I am wholly unpersuaded that I should make a finding of contributory negligence against Mr Biesheuvel."

Mr Justice Eady said: "I am wholly unpersuaded that I should make a finding of contributory negligence against Mr Biesheuvel."



The wattled jacana: the male accepts that it must rear chicks it has not fathered, biologists found

# Left in the lurch by flighty females

By NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

FEW males in creation get a worse deal than the wattled jacana, a tropical waterbird disgracefully exploited by its mates.

The females mate with as many males as they can find, leaving them to hatch and raise chicks they have not even fathered. Why the males put up with this is a mystery studied for six years by American biologists at a nesting site in the Chagres River, Panama. The males are making the best of a bad job, they conclude.

The team, led by Stephen Emlen, of Cornell University, observed more than 1,400 noisy copulations between the dominant females and the much smaller males. They made DNA fingerprints of 465 adult and juvenile birds to trace parentage and proved that, as a cuckold, the male wattled jacana is in a class of its own.

The females practise polyandry, a sexual arrangement very rare among vertebrates, in which each female pairs simultaneously with a harem of males. Chick-rearing is not, however, part of the females' repertoire: they leave that to the males.

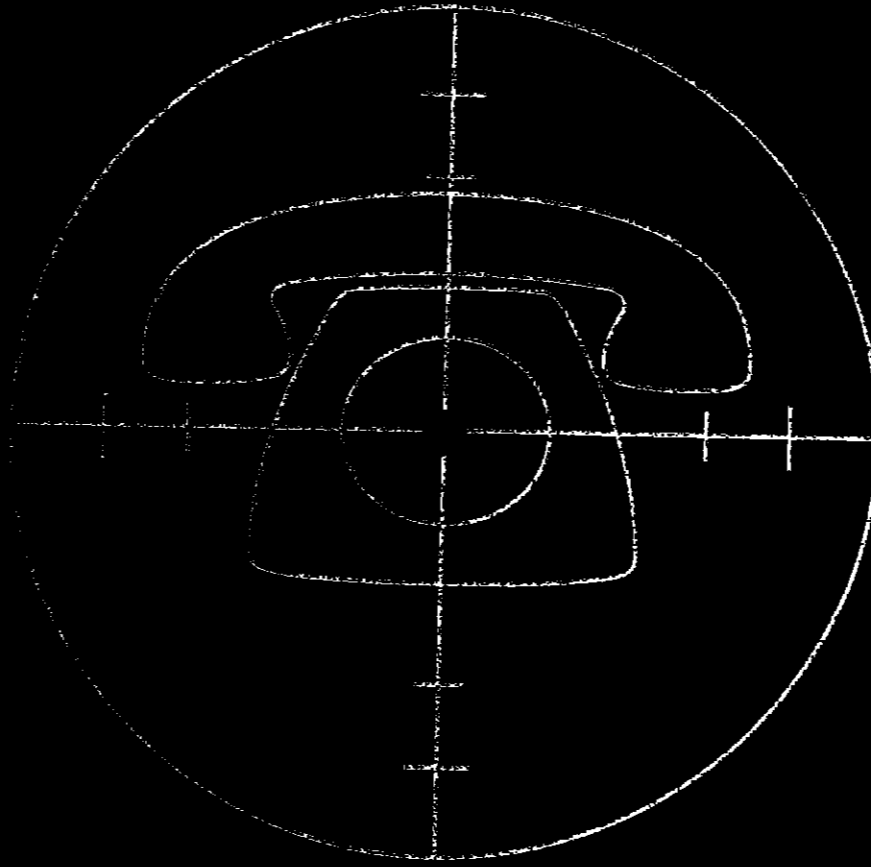
The study, published in *Proceedings of the Royal Society*, shows that three quarters of the broods raised by the males contain chicks that are not their own. Only if males are in

short supply, and the females' promiscuity is inhibited by lack of opportunity, can the males be sure that they are raising their own young.

"These results are surprising," admits Professor Emlen. "Biologists have assumed that males would only bear full parental responsibility for incubating eggs and raising the young when there is certainty that the young are genetically his own. Instead, a mala jacana sits on the nest watching the mother of the chicks he will raise while she continues to mate with other males nearby."

The team concludes that male jacanas have simply learnt to make the best of things. "They seem to understand that, if they abandon mixed-parentage chicks, all the young — including their own — will die," he says.

And for the wattled jacana, there is a worse fate than being a cuckold — not getting to mate at all. In heavily populated areas, with limited space for nests, many males are never propositioned by a female. "I guess you could say that the males are lucky to be seduced and abandoned, considering the alternative," says co-author Peter Wrege, of the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute. "At least they are adding something of their own to the gene pool."



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# Manhunt ends with Golden Gate suicide

Adrian Lee reports on violent end for a husband suspected of killing his British wife and daughter

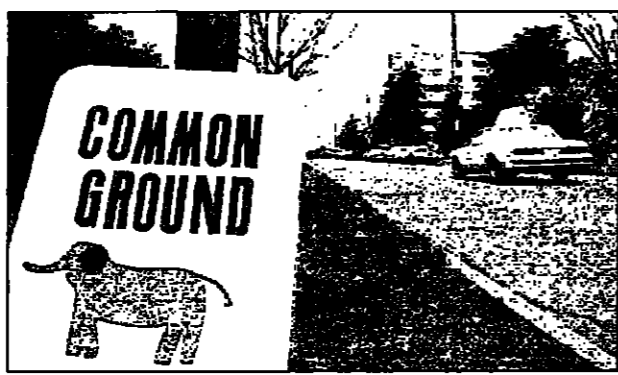
A HUNT across North America for a man suspected of murdering his British wife and their daughter ended when he shot himself on the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco.

The killings of Melanie Edwards, 33, and her daughter, Carli Fay, 2, shocked the wealthy community of Gig Harbor, 40 miles south of Seattle, Washington, on the Pacific coast.

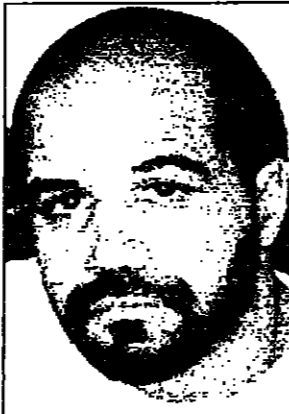
She had complained that Carlton Lee Edwards, 37, her estranged husband, had been stalking her after a dispute over custody of the child. He went on the run after the shootings and police at first believed that he was trying to reach Canada to catch a flight to Britain, where he is believed to have relatives.

However, on Saturday a man matching his description shot himself on the Golden Gate Bridge after brandishing a handgun at a highway patrolman. It was confirmed last night that the body was that of Edwards, an aircraft industry worker.

The case was featured on the television programme *America's Most Wanted*. Mrs Edwards, a dental assistant, who left Britain six years ago to live with her eventual husband, had filed for divorce, claiming that he had tried to choke her. She took their daughter to live in a women's



The street on which mother and daughter were killed



Carlton Edwards: subject of *America's Most Wanted*

shelter in Seattle and obtained a protection order banning her husband from coming within 500 yards.

Later she apparently relented and allowed him access to the child. Mrs Edwards was shot four times as she collected the girl from a social work centre after one of the visits to her father. The girl was shot once in the chest.

Police discovered that Edwards had resigned from his job with United Airlines two days before the killings and removed thousands of dollars from his bank account. A search of his home uncovered a box of ammunition matching that used in the murders, with 20 bullets missing. Also found were empty boxes for a new gun and holster. Edwards was first seen in a motel in Oregon, then was approached in San Francisco when the patrolman became suspicious about a car sitting on the bridge, which is infamous for suicide attempts.

A police spokeswoman said: "The driver produced a handgun, which he aimed at the officer. As the officer drew his

own weapon and retreated to a place of cover, the occupant of the car pointed the gun at his own head and fired a single shot."

Edwards, originally from Louisiana, was divorced from his first wife, who, sources said, was also English, when he met his second wife on a holiday in England. They were married in Illinois but later moved to Gig Harbor, on Puget Sound, an area popular with wealthy commuters.

Neighbours said that the Edwards family seemed normal. The father played basketball with local children and held barbecues for neighbours. He was said to dote on his daughter.

Papers filed by his wife with the King County Superior Court showed a different picture. She wrote: "I am very afraid for myself and my daughter. Carlton has threatened to kill me many times since we have been together." She said the worst attack was in July when she and her husband argued about a dog. "Carlton pushed me up against the wall with his hands around my throat, choking me."

"He told me: 'I'll kill you before I divorce you, and as long as my parents are alive, you'll never get Carli.' He has a pistol he keeps in a locked case. I am afraid he will use it on me."

Despite her fears, Edwards was apparently given permission by the authorities in Seattle to keep a gun.

A friend of Mrs Edwards said: "She was beat up, once re-



Melanie Edwards: she said her husband had threatened many times to kill her

ally bad. She showed up with dark glasses and a black eye that looked like Muhammad Ali had taken her on." Social workers said Edwards seemed depressed and feared that his wife would return to England, taking their daughter.

Maureen Scott, who supervised Carli's handovers be-

tween her father and mother, described the girl as "smart, active, a bundle of energy who loved to talk. She had long, dark, curly hair. She had dark eyes. A real bubbly face. She looked more like her Dad than her Mom."

First-degree murder charges, punishable by the death

penalty, had already been filed against Edwards.

The Foreign Office said that Mrs Edwards's parents, who live in England, had been informed, but refused to give further details. A spokesman could not confirm reports in the United States that her husband also held a British passport.

NEWS IN BRIEF

## Damages fight lost by dancer

A dancer who sued a production company for back injuries which ended his career lost his High Court fight for damages. Kevin Woods, 26, blamed the injuries on a series of complicated lifts while he was a principal dancer in a touring production of Lord Lloyd-Webber's musical *Aspects of Love* in 1993. Mr Woods, who used the stage name Kevin Andrew, claimed that he had not been properly trained by the company, Barry Clayman Concerts. However, Judge Anthony Kenny said that the company had carried out its duties to the dancer.

## Driver killed

A mother of three was crushed to death by her car as she scraped ice from its windows in Highter's Heath, Birmingham. Jane Thomas, 41, a care worker, reached inside to turn the ignition but, with the gear in reverse and the handbrake off, the car shot backwards, pinning her under the front wheel and the kerb.

## Players charged

The West Ham players Neil Ruddock and Trevor Sinclair are to appear in court today after an alleged disturbance outside a wine bar at Romford, Essex. Mr Ruddock, 30, is charged with affray after allegedly throwing a bottle at a car. Mr Sinclair, 25, who allegedly kicked the car, is charged with criminal damage.

## £2.4m payout

The parents of James Green, 6, who was left severely brain-damaged after a mix-up led to his receiving a mismatched blood transfusion as a newborn baby in Princess Alexandra Hospital, Harlow, were awarded damages of £2.4 million at the High Court. North Essex Health Authority had admitted liability.

## Clergyman quits

The Dean of Guildford Cathedral, the Very Rev Alex Wedderspoon, told the congregation that a canon had resigned and another was on leave because of marital problems. His statement on the unrelated cases came after a letter sent to a local newspaper, but not published, criticised clerical standards and secrecy.

## Baby in shoebox

A newborn baby was found in a shoebox in a golf-club car park in Belfast. The couple who found him, on Sunday night, thought at first that it was a wind-up toy. Nurses at the Royal Maternity Hospital named the boy Christopher. He is reported to be well. Police have appealed for the mother to come forward.

## Men shun help on cancer

By IAN MURRAY, MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT  
MEN with cancer are far less likely to seek information about treatment than women and scarcely a third of sufferers who are unemployed make use of services available to help them.

Repeated studies have shown that information and support to people with cancer reduce anxiety and uncertainty and improve the quality of life for sufferers, yet many of those who need help the most are not seeking it. The report, published today in the *British Journal of Cancer*, says the findings show there is an urgent need to find out why significant sections of

the population fail to find and use the help that is available. "Doctors and hospitals must allocate the resources to guide patients to where they can find more help and advice," Jean Mossman, chief executive of the charity, said. "There needs to be a guarantee that everyone affected by cancer - no matter what their background, age, type of cancer or where they live - is told about the help and support that is available to them."

## Deaf share in £7m lottery awards

THE deaf and disabled are among those who will benefit from £7 million of millennium awards announced yesterday. Twelve new schemes, involving 2,000 "ordinary" people across the country, will be getting National Lottery money from the Millennium Commission.

They include £1.75 million for the Jack Ashley millennium awards for young deaf people, enabling 14 to 25-year-old deaf people to undertake confidence-boosting challenges. More than £412,000 will go to a scheme to give disabled people in Scotland the chance to design and carry out projects to improve access to the coun-

tryside for others who are disabled. Other awards include £1.37 million to establish a Welsh community fellowship to support local people committed to social, economic and environmental regeneration; £620,580 for improving quality of life in Enfield and Haringey in North London; £660,945 for a community project in Swansea; and £551,150 for a Liverpool residents' scheme involving a community-based training programme.

The commission has so far supported 187 capital projects on 3,000 sites at a cost of £1.3 billion. A group of 20 nurses and carers at a

## Fraudster altered winners

A COMPUTER operator on the *Racing Post* changed the published results of greyhound races in a betting fraud aimed at fooling bookmakers. Neil Taylor, 22, was sentenced yesterday to 180 hours' community service by Southwark Crown Court, Central London, after admitting alter-

ing the names of "winning" dogs in the newspaper's results service. The false results from minor meetings were meant to tally with bets he had already placed, but he gave himself up to police after the deception was spotted. Taylor, from Harlow, Essex, who stood to win £800,

chose minor meetings in August knowing that the bookies relied on the *Racing Post* for the results. He was seen on security video tampering with the computer. Judge George Bathurst Norman said that Taylor had saved himself from prison by going to police and by pleading guilty.

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# Sun shines on chosen few in ancient ritual

AT THE heart of the great burial mound in Co Meath, an exclusive, 21-strong audience waited expectantly in the pitch dark to witness one of the oldest, and certainly most magical, shows on Earth.

As the sun rose over low hills on the far side of the frosty Boyne river valley, its rays crept along the narrow, 62ft passage leading to the neolithic chamber, bathing the great stone slabs of the walls in golden light.

They stopped well short of the chamber. But that was merely the curtain-raiser. At precisely 8.58am the sun penetrated a narrow slit, or "roof box", above the outer entrance to the passage. The silence was broken by gasps of wonder and excited whispers as a sliver of light appeared on the floor in the furthest recess of the chamber, fully 80ft from the entrance.

Over the next 17 minutes, the chosen few saw a performance that man first watched with equal awe more than 5,000 years ago. The narrow beam slowly stretched the length of the chamber's floor in a flame-coloured finger so intense that it seemed solid. Then it gradually contracted back to nothing, plunging the chamber into darkness.

"It was absolutely wonderful," said Sile de Valera, Ireland's Arts and Heritage Minister. "It's an amazing event," said John Hill, an ageing Eng-

**Dawn show at 5,000-year-old burial mound is breathtaking**  
**Martin Fletcher was there**

lish hippy who said he was in Ireland to search for the Ark of the Covenant. "I'll never forget it in my whole life," declared a German with a long, straggly beard who described himself as a "priest of the old religion" called simply Arkana.

It is easier to get a ticket to the FA Cup final or an opening night at Covent Garden than it is to celebrate the winter solstice inside the Newgrange chamber. These people had applied between eight and 12 years ago. The waiting list is 800-long and closed. "Some people die before they get in," an official said.

Dozens of people had gathered in the freezing dawn to see what little they could from the outside. A few asked those with tickets to take in crystals and other objects to put in the beam. "I'm a healer and this is a sacred site," explained Elaine Swords, who came from Manchester clad in a coat of many colours.

Even those who do get in are

often disappointed. Yesterday was the first clear dawn since 1995, and only the third in 12 years. With cloud, the show is distinctly unimpressive.

Newgrange, 700 years older than Stonehenge and older than the oldest pyramids, is one of the earliest man-made structures.

It is a huge, round, earth-covered mound built with 200,000 tonnes of stone around 3,200BC by New Stone Age farmers, the first to settle in the rich Boyne valley. They surrounded the mound with a ring of standing stones. Their astronomical and engineering skills are breathtaking, but their purpose remains a mystery.

Perhaps they were sun worshippers hoping that the beam would reawaken the spirits of the dead whose cremated remains they deposited in the chamber's three recesses. Perhaps the beam of the male Sun entering the female Earth symbolised the bringing of new life to the dead of winter.

Within 1,000 years of the mound's construction, its outer walls had collapsed and it was forgotten. It was not rediscovered until 1699, when a local farmer named Charles Campbell stumbled across the exquisitely engraved entrance rock while removing stones for building.

Over the next two centuries, Newgrange was visited by tomb robbers, by the curious and by people who carved their names on its ancient surfaces. But not until an archaeology professor named Michael O'Kelly began excavations in 1962 did anyone realise its true significance. Dr O'Kelly found the roof box the following year. He guessed its purpose but it was another four years before the sun shone on the winter solstice and he could prove his theory. In 1967, he became the first man in 4,000 years to see the beam illuminate the inner chamber, but with one difference. Because of a slight tilt or "wobble" in the Earth's axis over those four millennia, the beam no longer quite touched the back wall.



Sunlight streaming along the entrance passage to the Newgrange chamber yesterday, a sight first witnessed 5,000 years ago

## Carlton censured again by ITV watchdog

By ANTHONY BARNES

CARLTON, the ITV company fined £2 million last week for a failed documentary, was criticised yesterday for a discussion show prompted by the Omagh bombing.

The Independent Television Commission said that the programme caused "widespread offence in Northern Ireland". Audience applause and flashing lights at the end of the show were inappropriate after Omagh relatives and victims, still in shock, had taken part.

The commission ruled that *Omagh: Thursday Night Live Special*, broadcast on August 30, five days after the bombing, breached its programme code. It upheld 47 complaints from viewers, nearly all from Northern Ireland, who felt that the programme was insensitive in its approach and its treatment of contributors.

"It appeared that through a lack of appreciation of the situation in Northern Ireland, serious misjudgments were made," said the commission. The balance between politicians and Omagh residents had been wrong, although technical problems had played a part.

A phone poll on a "simplistic" question, "Will the peace agreement work?", had been insensitive to those watching in Northern Ireland, said the commission. Carlton broadcast an apology to Northern Ireland viewers on December 9.

The record fine imposed on Carlton by the commission last week was for *The Connection*, broadcast in October 1996, which purported to expose a new heroin smuggling route from Colombia to Britain. The company's internal investigation found that substantial scenes were faked, although it said that Carlton chiefs were unaware of it. The fine was imposed for ten breaches of the commission's programme code.

Complaints about Granada's *This Morning*, which arranged for three married couples to try the anti-impotence drug Viagra, were not upheld, although the commission said that the item came "very close" to breaching the programme code. (PA News)



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# Firm loses jail contract over £500,000 debts

A PROJECT to allow a private company to run prison workshops has collapsed after losing almost £500,000 in its first year of operation.

The Prison Service announced yesterday that the project at Coldingley jail in Surrey was to be brought back into the public sector and run by prison officers.

Wackenhut (UK) was chosen to run the industrial unit at the prison in an attempt to improve profitability of jail industries by introducing private sector efficiency. But the project was plagued by controversy after it was disclosed that the American-owned firm had been given a £100,000 loan by the Prison Service to buy raw materials and was allowed free gas and electricity.

The three workshops will be transferred back to the Prison Service next month after a failure to agree new terms for the contract, which involved running a laundry, a signwriting and shelf-building workshop at the prison near Bistley, Sur-

**Project to run workshops will be taken over by the public sector, writes Richard Ford**

rey. One hundred and fifty prisoners were employed in the workshops.

The firm found it difficult to win contracts for the shelves and signwriting, but made a success of the laundry. Prison Service sources said that officials expected to recover the interest-free loan plus the value of electricity and gas used by the workshops. The losses of about £40,000 a month are being met by Wackenhut.

It was the first time the running of all workshops inside a jail had been contracted out to the private sector. The Prison

Service said last night that it had always been a pilot scheme, and that the experiment could be attempted in future after a full evaluation of what had gone wrong.

A spokesman for Wackenhut said that the company's managing director was dealing with the matter.

Last night penal reform groups demanded to know the total amount of money that had been spent from public funds on the scheme.

Stephen Shaw, director of the Prison Reform Trust, said: "It has been a disastrous experiment of involving the private sector in running part of a prison. One thing we want to know is how much money has been expended subsidising Wackenhut to so little effect."

Harry Fletcher, assistant general secretary of the National Association of Probation Officers, said: "The whole privatisation project was flawed. Prison workshops are about rehabilitation not about making a profit."



The Rev Kevin Chandra and the Church of England advertisement in which he features. The caption reads: "He hates Christmas... shopping"

## O come all ye alcoholics and ex-cons

Ruth Gledhill on the Church's new advertising campaign

THE Church of England is a refuge for alcoholics, for people who have gone through multiple divorces, had abortions or been in prison, according to its latest Christmas television advertising campaign.

Two dioceses have launched a joint Christmas campaign with the slogan: "You don't

have to be perfect to go to church this Christmas."

The 30-second advertisements, in black and white, represent a marked change from former campaigns, which were widely criticised by bishops and clergy. Instead of presenting the church as a trendy place for youngsters aiming at a yuppie lifestyle, the campaign depicts the suffering and depression of everyday life. The advertisement, which

would have cost about £250,000 if the advertising executives involved had not donated their services free, stars the Rev Kevin Chandra, 33, a curate in Walmley, Birmingham, who confesses that he hates Christmas shopping.

Actors are used to portray a child who will not eat cabbage, a man on his third marriage, a woman who had an abortion at 14, a former prison inmate, and an alcoholic.

The Bishop of Birmingham, the Right Rev Mark Santer, said: "I hope those who see it will catch a real glimpse of what's on offer at their own local church."

The advertisement was the idea of the Rev Robert Ellis, of the Lichfield diocese, and Sue

Primmer, the communications officer for the Birmingham diocese. Mr Ellis described their efforts to persuade the wider church to advertise on television as an "up-hill struggle". He added: "We have got to do this if we want to bridge the gap between the church and the market place."

It is the third televised Church of England campaign since the 1990 Broadcasting Act allowed religious groups to advertise on television.

The campaign is sponsored by Jerusalem Productions, the broadcasting arm of the Jerusalem Trust, and by Christians in the Media, a group of Christians who work in advertising. The two dioceses have put in £8,000 between them. The campaign, to be broadcast on Central West, is expected to reach up to five million viewers.



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## Ferries launch a new wave of catering

By Robin Young

### FARE SAILING

#### STARTERS

Poached egg with haddock in cream sauce  
Mushrooms and bacon baked with Lancashire cheese  
Black pudding with sauerkraut and bacon in mushroom sauce  
Langan's seafood salad

#### MAIN COURSES

Traditional roast of the day  
Cod and chips  
Bangers and mash  
Liver and bacon with white onion sauce  
Gammon in parsley sauce  
Steak and kidney pie

#### DESSERTS

Crème brûlée  
Tresle tart and custard  
Bread and butter pudding  
Coffee

Prices have not yet been finalised but P&O Stena Line and Langan's Brasserie are aiming to offer a choice of two courses with coffee for £13 a head and three courses with coffee for £18 a head

THE Channel is the new battleground for culinary supremacy between France and Britain. A restaurant renowned for traditional British food is to open on board cross-Channel ferries, challenging the tres moderne cuisine offered by another renowned restaurateur on a French ferry line.

Travelers untroubled by the choppy waters between Dover and Calais will be able to dine in floating branches of Langan's Brasserie on seven P&O Stena Line ships. The brasserie, owned by the chef Richard Shepherd and the actor Michael Caine, is renowned for giving a cordon bleu flavour to dishes such as sausages and mash.

It will be steaming into battle against Jean-Christophe Novelli, the London-based chef whose services are retained by SeaFrance. P&O Stena's rival on the other side of the Channel. His restaurants, including Novelli and Les Saveurs, serve dishes such as *boudin noir à ma façon* and *rouget au ratatouille*.

Kitchen and waiting staff from P&O Stena have been secretly working at Langan's Brasserie, in Mayfair, to learn its style. More ferry staff will be on placements in the new year and when the first floating Langan's opens, aboard the super-ferry *Burgundy* early in the new year, Mr Shepherd and members of his team will be making cross-Channel trips to supervise operations.

Mr Shepherd said yesterday: "We are aiming to up the stakes in cross-Channel catering. The menu will include the sort of homely food that Langan's Brasserie customers love best: bangers and mash with white onion sauce, cod and chips, fishcakes with braised peas and that sort of thing." Prices, the ferry line said yesterday, "are yet to be set but will be highly competitive".

Other transport groups have associated themselves with famous chefs, with varying success. The French railway once retained the man

many considered the greatest of Michelin three-star chefs in France, Joël Robuchon, but the relationship quickly broke down.

British Airways' stable of consultants has included the Roux brothers, Virgin Atlantic tied with Raymond Blanc of *Le Manoir aux Quat' Saisons*, and Emirates recruited Bernard Cornou, of the Hyatt Carlton Tower.

British Rail, before privatisation, sought to ameliorate the image of railway catering with sandwiches designed by Clement Freud.

The railway company GNER recently won an international award from *On-board Service* magazine in the United States. Its catering is inspired by Eugene and Tom McCoy, of the Cleveland Tonne restaurant in North Yorkshire.

Leading article, page 17



Richard Shepherd: aims to "up the stakes" in ferry cuisine



# Rod Stewart puts paid to girls' singing protest

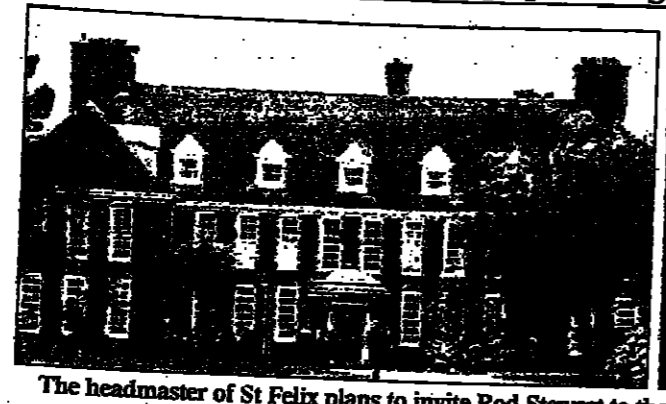
Rock star emerges as buyer of painting that pupils fought to save, writes Victoria Fletcher

SCHOOLGIRLS who sang hymns non-stop to protest at their school's decision to sell a Renaissance painting have lost out to rock'n'roll. The depiction of the Madonna and Child was bought by the pop star Rod Stewart.

The independent St Felix School, at Southwold, Suffolk, upset its 155 pupils when it decided to sell the 16th-century painting to raise funds for a new sports hall and theatre. Despite the musical protest, the picture was auctioned at Sotheby's last week and went to an anonymous buyer for £84,000.

Yesterday Stewart admitted that it was he who had bought the work by Ranieri di Leonardo da Pisa. The spiky-haired singer of hits such as *Do You Think I'm Sexy?* is also a keen collector of Victorian and Pre-Raphaelite works of art.

The 53-year-old rocker said he had no idea of the controversy surrounding the sale. He described the picture of an enthroned Virgin and Child sur-



The headmaster of St Felix plans to invite Rod Stewart to the school to pacify the girls



rounded by St Anne, St Bartholomew and St Michael as "beautiful": its gilded tabernacle frame was "spectacular".

Still recovering from a spell of laryngitis, which forced him to cancel a concert for 15,000 people in Manchester, Stewart said: "I want the girls to know the painting is going to a good home where it will be loved and cherished."

Rick Williams, Headmaster

at St Felix, said he hoped that the painting's new owner would find the time to visit the school to pacify the girls. "We hope to invite Mr Stewart to the school soon so we can tell him about the background of the painting and where it hung," he said.

When they found out in October that the painting was to be sold, all the girls at the £12,000-a-year boarding school

refused to leave the chapel after morning assembly and stood singing hymns for over half an hour until the headmaster was summoned. They told him the picture was part of their heritage and should be preserved for future generations.

Mr Williams said: "It was a very dignified protest by the girls and a proper way to show their feelings. They just wanted to make it clear to the gover-

nors how much they valued the painting in the chapel. Somebody telephoned me to say what was happening and I went over to find them all singing loudly and refusing to budge.

"I had to go in to explain about how the new painting was being commissioned. They listened calmly to what I had to say before going back to lessons."

He added: "The governors decided some time ago to embark on an ambitious building scheme to enhance the school, financed mostly by the sale of existing assets. It was decided to sell the painting, along with one worth about £10,000, which hangs in my study, and several houses that the school owns."

The school owners, who include Dame Stella Rimington, the former head of MI5, promised to allow the girls to choose a replacement tapestry or painting by a contemporary local artist.



The girls wanted the painting, by Ranieri di Leonardo da Pisa, to remain at St Felix

## Woman of 88 murdered in bungled raid

By Helen Johnstone

AN ELDERLY woman is thought to have been murdered after a burglary at a sheltered housing scheme went wrong.

Two men were spotted running from a flat where Hilda Tizard, a widow of 88, was found bound by her hands and feet and strangled. The raiders had ransacked her home in Bognor Regis, West Sussex.

Police believe that she was asleep in bed when her attackers struck last Thursday. The flat was fitted with a panic button, but it had not been activated.

Detective Chief Inspector Alan Ladley, who is leading a team of 50 murder squad officers, said: "We don't believe that people went there deliberately to murder her. It seems consistent with a burglary that went terribly wrong."

"The flat was ransacked but there was no evidence of a struggle. We assume she was tied up and then, for some reason, strangled. Whether it was to stop her screaming or not we don't know."

Police are trying to identify a witness who dialled 999 from a telephone kiosk in the town centre after seeing two suspicious-looking men running from the murder scene seven hours before her body was discovered.



Hilda Tizard: was found tied up and strangled

covered. Police went to the flats, half a mile from the kiosk, but they could find no signs of anything suspicious and left. Mrs Tizard's body was later found on the floor of her flat by a warden during a routine check of 30 elderly residents.

Mr Ladley added: "The man who made the call has vital information and we are appealing for him to come forward. We are reviewing CCTV tapes from cameras in the town centre, including those that might see if the caller can be identified or the two men spotted running away."

The block of approximately 20 flats in the sheltered accommodation called Poynings has an on-site warden. Each property has an alarm button connecting residents to the warden. The resort has one of the highest percentages of retired and elderly people in the country.

The oldest resident, Ethel James, 91, who lives there with her husband, John, said: "Mrs Tizard was just a frail old lady. There was a cloud over the place when we heard what had happened. This is a wonderful home with a lovely Christian fellowship, and we are all encouraging each other."

Edith Ainsworth, 83, said that both she and Mrs Tizard worshipped every Sunday at a nearby chapel. Mr Ladley said that counsellors from Victim Support were working with residents to help them to come to terms with what had happened.

He added: "We have no clear motive and there is nothing yet to tell us if anything was taken or whether there was anything worth taking."

Mrs Tizard, who had lived at the flats for about two years, first moved to Bognor Regis about ten years ago. She grew up and spent much of her life in the London area.

Forensic scientists were yesterday still searching the site and are expected to be at the scene for several more days.

## Gut reaction to computer game

By Ian Murray, Medical Correspondent

A COMPUTER game that teaches the gut to relax has been developed by doctors specialising in irritable bowel syndrome, a stress-related condition.

The game uses biofeedback, a behavioural therapy technique. Changes caused by stress to electrical activity on the skin can be monitored from electrodes and transformed into a visual display. Doctors at the Royal Free Hospital in London adapted a game called *Evolve*, which requires sustained mental relaxation to transform a fish in a sea into higher life forms.

For the irritable bowel game, animated computer graphics were developed to simulate forward and backward movement through the alimentary canal. The animation provides a stylised image of the bowel through an endo-

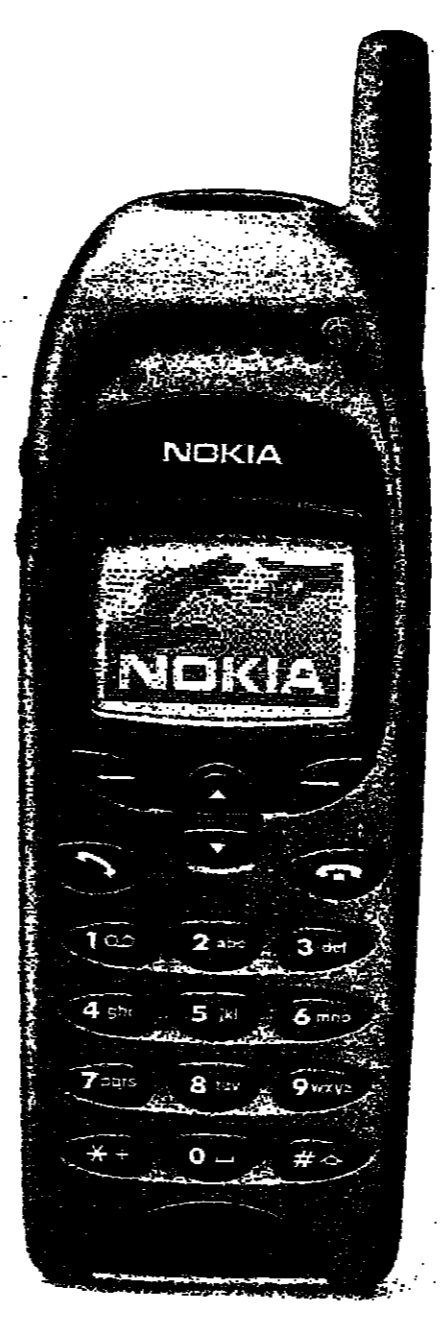
scope. Mental relaxation caused a forward movement through the bowel, while stress was translated into backward movement.

The game involved two tasks that could be performed only by sustained relaxation. The first required the patient to travel from the stomach to a point in the bowel where the dominant symptom was symbolised by a red screen for pain or bubbles for bloating.

For the second task the patient is required to relax long enough to change the screen to a graphic of a stream flowing through peaceful countryside -- a "reward".

Half of 40 patients tested found the game very helpful and the doctors report in the *Journal of the Royal College of Physicians of London* that it taught deep relaxation rapidly and effectively.

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CONNECTING PEOPLE

# Ten years on, a town remembers

Residents unite with relatives of victims at church service to mark anniversary, writes Gillian Harris

A SIMPLE church service to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the Lockerbie bombing began in the town last night with a minute's silence in memory of the 270 people who lost their lives.

At 7.03pm, the precise time when Pan Am Flight 103 was blown apart by a terrorist bomb, the 700-strong congregation in Dryfesdale Parish Church stood with their heads bowed remembering the victims of Britain's worst air disaster.

The minute's silence, which was marked at simultaneous services of remembrance in Westminster Abbey, Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, and Syracuse University in New York, where 35 of the victims were students, was broken in Lockerbie by a piper's lament, *Flowers of the Forest*, played by Fiona McCall.

Relatives of around 60 victims who made the pilgrimage to Lockerbie were joined by residents who have become friends over the ten years they have known each other.

Although public figures and politicians had been urged to remain in the background yesterday, messages from the Queen, the Prime Minister and the President Clinton offering support and encouragement were read out in church.

The Queen said: "Our thoughts and prayers today are with the families and friends of those 270 people from so many countries whose lives were tragically taken in the Lockerbie bombing ten years ago. Time cannot erase their memory. We pray that

on this anniversary the families will find solace together in quiet remembrance across the world."

Tony Blair's statement, delivered by Donald Dewar, the Scottish Secretary, described the bombing as a "calamity made and perpetuated by men which has imprinted itself indelibly in the minds of the people of this country". He added: "My thoughts today are with the families and friends of these innocent victims in the air and on the ground whose lives were so cruelly taken away by an act of terrorism without parallel in our history."

Mr Clinton reminded the congregation that the bombing was a "cowardly act of terrorism" and vowed to continue the campaign to bring those responsible to justice. Cathy Hurst, the United States Consul-General for Scotland, read his statement: "Ten years ago the families of those who were aboard Pan Am Flight 103 and the people of Lockerbie were brought together by the devastating loss they shared."

"In the intervening years the people of Lockerbie have shown tremendous kindness toward those whom they first met in the aftermath of the tragedy."

"I salute all of you gathered in Lockerbie who along with the families of victims from my country and elsewhere have turned sorrow into a source of strength for all who stand against terror."

The 30-minute service, conducted by the Rev David Al-



Wreaths were laid at the memorial plinth in Lockerbie to the 270 victims. "We will not rest till we have justice and truth," Father Pat Keegans said

mond, included prayers of peace, hope and love. Children from Lockerbie Primary School choir, who were not born when the jumbo jet exploded above their town, sang *Let There Be Love*.

It was an emotional day for those who chose to spend the anniversary in Lockerbie. The festive atmosphere which has captured the quiet market town since the Christmas

lights went on 11 days ago was swamped by a resurgence of grief and memories of the horrific events of December 21, 1988.

Earlier the Duke of Edinburgh joined local councillors, friends and relatives in a wreath-laying ceremony at the memorial plinth to the victims in Dryfesdale cemetery.

Standing in the rain, Father Pat Keegans, the parish priest

at the time, spoke of his memories of the 11 people who died in Lockerbie when the plane demolished their homes. He recalled his wish that time could be turned back and the victims allowed to live. "But we live in reality. The reality is a bomb ticking away, unseen and lethal."

"That's why we are here today, in front of your stone of remembrance. That's why we

gather to say with one voice that we miss you, that you are not forgotten, that we know you are happy and alive with God in Heaven and that, in our minds and our hearts, you live on."

"Some would tell us that we should draw a line now at your tenth anniversary. We shall not draw any line. To do so would be an insult to your lives, to your families and

friends and to the people of Lockerbie.

"You will see us laying wreaths at your stone. We want you to be sure that these wreaths are not hollow, empty gestures but a statement and declaration full of promise. It is a declaration that we will not rest until we have justice and truth, until all responsible for your deaths are held accountable."

## Duke of York joins families at Abbey

Alan Hamilton reports on memorials further afield

IN LONDON as well as Scotland, the disaster of Pan Am Flight 103 was remembered last night, ten years to the hour that the Boeing 747 was ripped to pieces by a bomb over the Scottish Borders.

In Westminster Abbey, the Duke of York, who visited the scene of the tragedy ten years ago, joined the bereaved families of 30 British passengers at a service of remembrance which has been organised eve-

ry year by the pressure group UK Families Flight 103.

As the names were read out, a candle was lit for each of them.

Some of yesterday's commemorations were intensely personal. At a free concert in Westminster Cathedral last night the Hilliard Ensemble and Fretwork, two early mu-

sic groups, performed *Cadman Requiem*, written by the Leicestershire-based composer Gavin Bryars. Bryars wrote the work in 1989 in memory of his friend and professional colleague Bill Cadman, a leading sound engineer of his time who died on the flight aged 32 along with his girlfriend.

"I was badly affected by

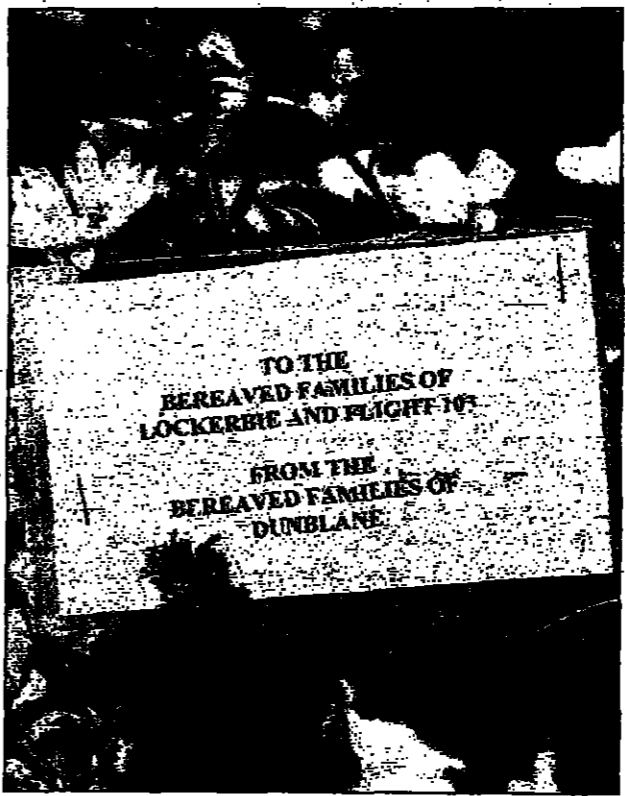
Bill's death: he was brilliant at what he did, and I wanted to do something to commemorate him." Mr Bryars said yesterday.

"Neither he nor I were practising Christians, so my Requiem omits the usual elements of damnation and forgiveness, and concentrates on the elements which speak of reas-

urance, like the *Agnus Dei*." The Requiem included a setting of the *Creation Hymn*, written in the 7th Century at Whitby Abbey by England's earliest known poet, the monk Caedmon — origin of the name Cadman. Mr Cadman's parents and many other members of his family were among the audience.

There were services in the United States yesterday to commemorate the American passengers and crew who died.

On Sunday, Bert Ammerman, a school principal from New Jersey, who lost his brother Thomas, addressed a church service in Lockerbie, and thanked the local people for their compassion and friendship. At the garden of remembrance at Dryfesdale cemetery in the town, Mr Ammerman laid a bouquet of flowers with the message "Tommy, you did not die in vain."



A tribute at the Dryfesdale Cemetery from Dunblane

## Annan hopeful suspects will be given up

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

THE UN Secretary-General expressed disappointment yesterday that Libya had not turned over the two suspects in the Lockerbie bombing, but said that he was still hopeful that the men would be surrendered to stand trial in the Netherlands.

In remarks to the victims' families, Kofi Annan said: "My message to them is that it is regrettable that ten years after the event, we have not been able to get to the truth so that they can put this behind them, mourn their dead and carry on with their lives."

"I am still hopeful that we will still get a positive decision from the Libyan Government. I have not lost hope. And they should not."

Robin Cook said he was "encouraged" by Libya's recent indications that it was moving towards surrendering the suspects. But the Foreign Secretary said that Britain and the United States were not prepared to compromise on their fate if they should be convicted.

Last week Libya's Parliament, the General People's Congress, issued a statement expressing broad satisfaction with the plan to try the suspects — suspected intelligence officers Abdul Baset Ali al-Megrahi and Lamin Khalifa Fhimma. It added the caveat, however, that obstacles must be overcome before the two could be handed over. Britain and the United States say that, if convicted, they would have to serve their sentences in Scotland. Libya has so far insisted that if found guilty they should be jailed in Libya.

After two rounds of discussions between UN officials and Libyan lawyers, Mr Annan travelled to Libya earlier this month to meet Colonel Gaddafi, but failed to secure the immediate surrender of the two. Libya is still asking for further "clarifications", although Britain and the United States say that they have provided all the assurances they can about the conduct of the trial.

A senior Arab diplomat said yesterday that Libya's decision in principle to hand over the suspects for trial in a third country was a "positive step" and that there could be a further development "in a few days".



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## Photos taken from chapel

BY HELEN JOHNSTONE

PHOTOGRAPHS of victims of the Lockerbie disaster were stolen from a chapel which has become a shrine to those who died and which last night hosted a 10th anniversary memorial service.

The photographs, including a montage of smiling crew members of Pan Am Flight 103, were taken from the walls of St George's Chapel at Heathrow airport. Photographs of the memorial garden in Lockerbie have also been stripped from the chapel walls.

Relatives who had helped to compile the tribute to their loved ones heard of the loss, which happened several months ago, when they arrived for the chapel service.

The Rev David Smith, who jointly led the service, said it was distressing that the photographs had been stolen. "As the anniversary arrives, relatives of the dead look to the chapel for comfort, but this year there will be a feeling that something is missing. It will make their grief all the more hard to bear. Visitors come to the chapel and one of the first things they look for is the picture of the crew members. It is irreplaceable."

"I'm sure a relative did not take it and that it was not done maliciously, but the thefts have caused a lot of people personal grief."

A spokesman for the Metropolitan Police at Heathrow said that they had no record of the thefts and that it was unlikely that they had been reported at the time.

## PRODUCT RECALL

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As a precaution we have withdrawn all affected codes.

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# Saddam secret army 'to launch London attacks'

REVENGE for the raids on Iraq could begin with terrorist attacks on President Saddam Hussein's opponents in Britain. Diplomats and security officials in the Gulf feared yesterday the Iraqi leader would "contract Islamic terrorist groups" to exact retaliation for Operation Desert Fox. Kuwait officials said they had stepped up security for Britons there, and revealed that terrorist threats were made yesterday against its embassy and offices in London. A leading Arab newspaper, *Al-Hayat*, published in London, reported receiving a telephone warning from an unnamed Islamic group threatening to bomb Kuwait targets in Britain. Many Iraqi dissidents live in London, including key figures in the Iraqi National Congress. A leading Scotland anti-terrorist detective yesterday called the threats very credible. You can take it are very aware of the heightened risk. Security checks and roadblocks have been stepped up in Kuwait City and officials at armed National Guards had been deployed around residential complexes where British diplomats and civilians are. More Western civilians are leaving Kuwait than the usual Christmas exodus, and

## Fears grow over contract killers, reports Daniel McGroarty in Kuwait City

an increasing number of Kuwaitis were yesterday trying to book flights out. The radical Islamic group, al-Qanana al-Islamiya, which has killed 1,250 people in a six-year campaign, gave a warning to *Al-Hayat* yesterday that it will start attacking Kuwaiti targets abroad. The group, whose spiritual leader, Sheikh Omar Abdel-Rahman, is in jail in the United States for conspiring to blow up the World Trade Centre in New York.

## US pleased by 72% hits

More than a quarter of the airstrikes launched from the aircraft carrier *USS Enterprise* missed their main targets, naval commanders said yesterday. But US officials praised the 72 per cent rate as exceptionally good. (AP)

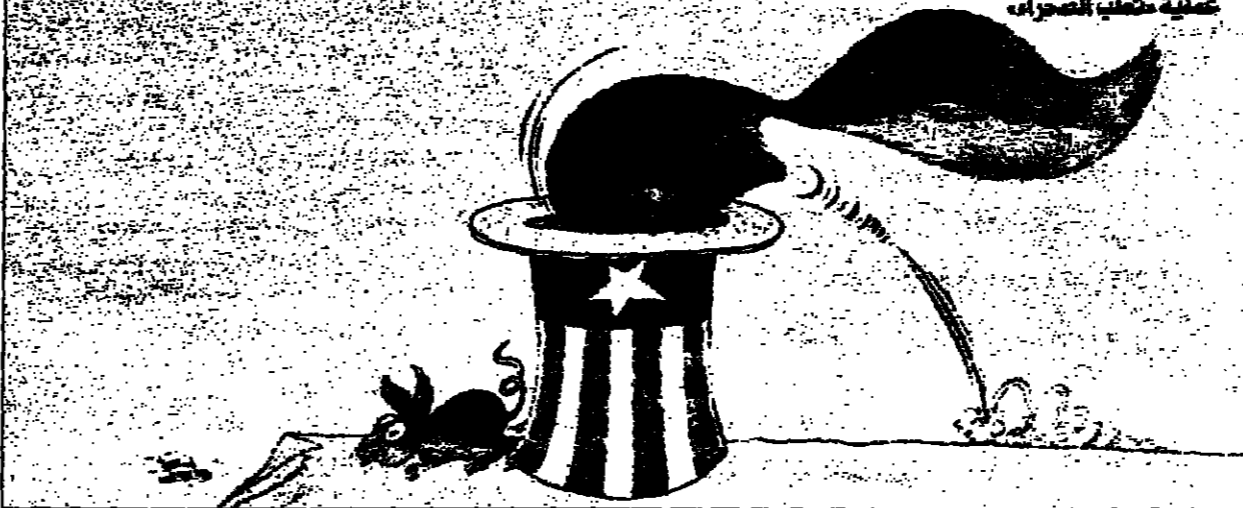
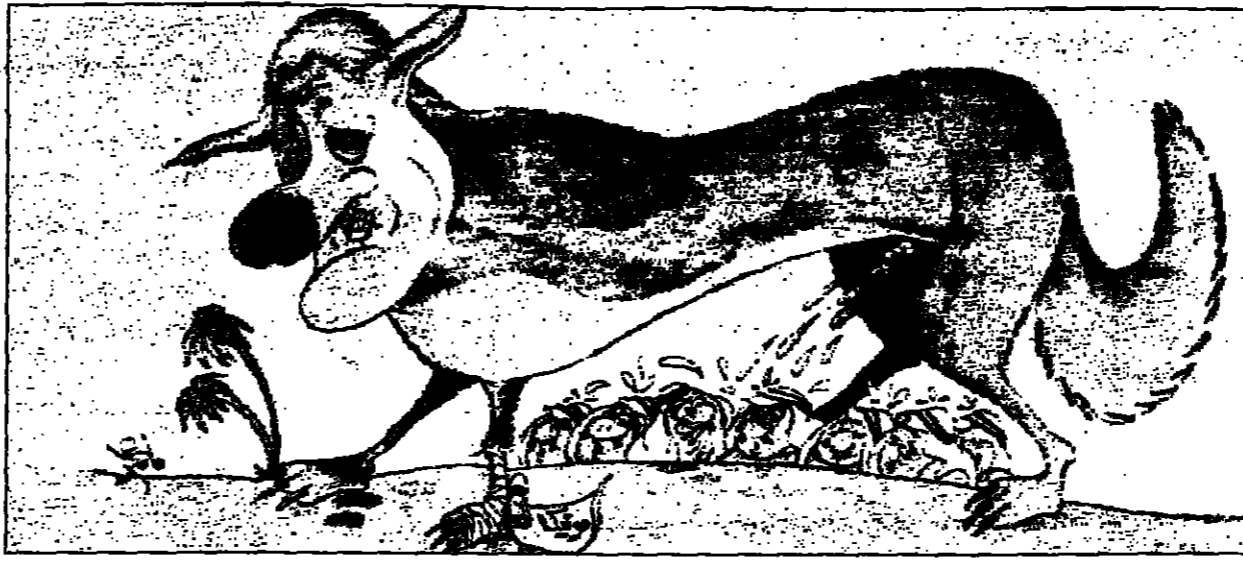
also threatened US targets yesterday. People in Bahrain's US Embassy were evacuated after a bomb threat, and in recent days the Americans have closed 40 embassies and missions overseas.

US intelligence agents are reported to have monitored a telephone conversation between the Saudi dissident, Osama bin Laden, in Afghanistan and a supporter in which he discusses an imminent bomb attack on a Western target. The Saudi millionaire is believed to have been responsible for the August bomb attacks on US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in which more than 290 were killed.

One senior Western diplomat said last night: "Saddam will want his revenge and he is cunning. If he were to launch a missile on one of his neighbours, that would just invite immediate airstrikes."

"He does not have an effective terrorist organisation working abroad, but there are plenty of Islamic extremist groups who would happily do the job for him."

"It was noticeable that in his last television address Saddam did not make the expected extravagant boasts of revenge. He does not want his fingerprint left on any attack which could be blamed on



Cartoons by Melhim Emad ridiculing the US-British airstrikes on Iraq, published in the Lebanese *Al-Kifah Al-Arabi* — one of many Middle Eastern newspapers to mock Operation Desert Fox as damaging US credibility in the region

# Defiant Baghdad scorns effect of strikes

By MICHAEL THEODOULOU IN NICOSIA

A DEFIANT Iraq claimed last night that 62 of its soldiers had been killed in the "criminal aggression" launched by Britain and America, but gave no figure for civilian casualties, which it said were much higher.

Just over half the "martyrs" were among the Special Republican Guards and the Republican Guards, Tariq Aziz, Iraq's Deputy Prime Minister, said. He told journalists in Baghdad that 180 more soldiers had been wounded, and poured scorn on the effectiveness of Operation Desert Fox. "What they really destroyed

## IRAQ

were barracks and buildings of Iraq's most elite forces," he said. "These can, and will, be rebuilt."

He accused Britain and America of resorting to the "law of the jungle" and of lying to their own people and the world. "We shall never, never accept conditions set by Clinton or Blair," he said when asked if Iraq would allow back the United Nations weapons inspectors.

Mr Aziz spoke after President Saddam Hussein met his senior aides to weigh the diplomatic fallout from the attacks. Buoyed by calls from France and Russia for an overall review of the UN policy to Iraq, the state-run press suggested Baghdad would not allow weapons experts back unless sanctions were lifted and Richard Butler, the UN's chief inspector, was sacked. Baghdad believes the Australian diplomat is an "American spy" used by Washington to prolong sanctions.

More than 100 UN relief workers evacuated to Jordan on the eve of the four-day bombing campaign are due to return today.

# British firms on alert to stop dictator rebuilding deadly arsenal

By MICHAEL EVANS DEFENCE EDITOR

## TECHNOLOGY

THE intelligence services have stepped up their counter-proliferation war against Iraq to stop President Saddam Hussein's agents acquiring British equipment and technology for his programme to build weapons of mass destruction. It is priority is now being given by MI6 and MI5, as well as by Customs and relevant government departments, to combat the Iraqis whether four days of bombing by

the Americans and British, are expected to be on the lookout for replacement computers and other key components for their arms systems.

British companies involved in producing "dual-use" equipment that could have military application are already regularly visited by MI5 and warned to watch for foreign customers seeking products that appear on a list of sensitive items linked to nuclear, chemical or

biological weapons. The warnings from MI5's counter-proliferation team cover at least ten countries that are known to be developing weapons of mass destruction.

However, Iraq has now gone to the top of the priority list, because, with United Nations arms inspectors no longer in Baghdad, it is expected to be more difficult to monitor the arrival of new equipment.

Up to 800 British companies have been earmarked for special attention. "Most of the responses we're getting are positive, which is encour-

aging," a security source said. The list of sensitive items includes supercomputers, optical signal processing equipment, high-speed cameras, fibre optics, infra-red imagery, ceramics, navigation systems, pesticides, high-temperature materials, guidance sets and aerosol generators. Companies are given notice of the visits by MI5.

Universities around the country are also expected to alert the authorities, under a "voluntary vetting scheme", about any application by a foreign postgraduate student

from one of the proliferating countries to do a course in subjects such as microbiology that could assist their governments in developing nuclear, chemical or biological weapons. MI6 and MI5 never forget that, in 1984, a female postgraduate student called Ribah Taha completed her PhD in biology at the University of East Anglia and went on to run Saddam's biological warfare programme. The intelligence services refer to her as "Dr Death".

One intelligence source said: "She learnt what she needed to

ident Bush during a visit to US troops at their Camp Doha base in Kuwait.

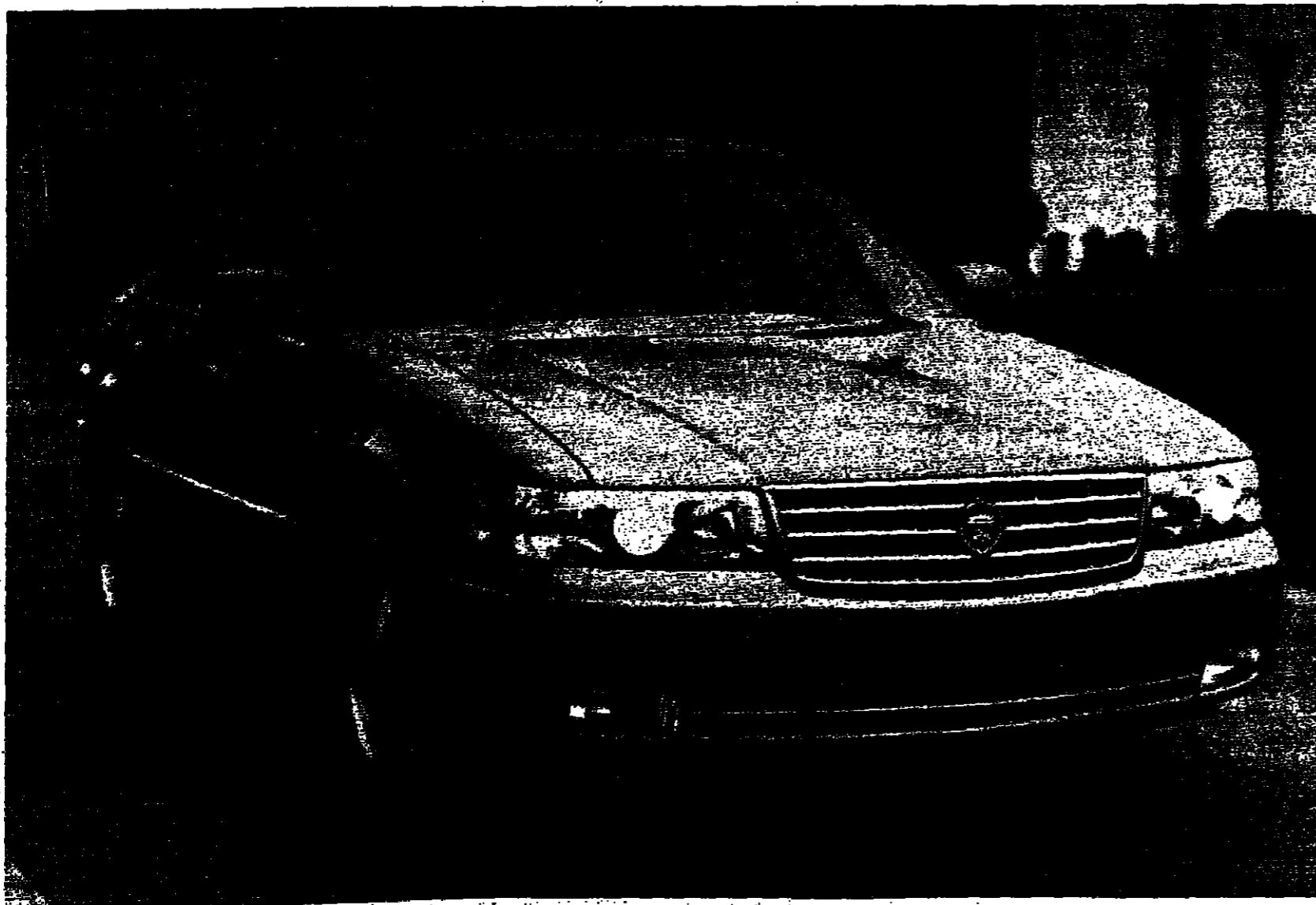
One Kuwaiti official said: "We know the terrorist threat from Saddam and others. We have already planned additional security." US troops were strengthening their desert positions on the border with Iraq.

British pilots in Kuwait have yet to restart enforcing the no-fly zone over southern Iraq. Military commanders in the Gulf said that Iraqi missile batteries might mistake a surveillance flight for a raid.

Although there have been much tighter controls on Iraqi students since Saddam's forces invaded Kuwait in 1990 and the Gulf War of 1991, MI5 officers are now reminding universities to be aware of Iraqi students already involved in courses who might have been sent to Britain to train in subjects that could assist the dictator's covert arms programmes.

One intelligence source said: "We know the terrorist threat from Saddam and others. We have already planned additional security." US troops were strengthening their desert positions on the border with Iraq.

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# Desperate Netanyahu heads for early election

AFTER a day of high political drama, Israel appeared last night to be heading for an early election after Benjamin Netanyahu's own right-wing Likud Party decided to switch its support behind the move.

## Likud's about-turn heralds a new period of instability, writes Christopher Walker in Jerusalem

The move by Likud, which took power from Labour in 1996 with Mr Netanyahu becoming the country's first directly elected Prime Minister, heralded a new period of dangerous instability in the Middle East. The Government has made clear that in

the run-up to an election the peace process with the Palestinians brokered by the US at Wye in Maryland in October would remain "on hold".

Saeed Erekat, the chief Palestinian negotiator, said that that would have dangerous consequences. He said in response to reports of the "peace freeze" during the election campaign: "Desperation will lead to desperate acts. This is the last thing we need."

Mr Netanyahu had already secured support from his Cabinet to freeze the process pending Palestinian compliance with certain conditions; that idea was rejected yesterday by the Palestinian Authority.

The Prime Minister was heckled from Left and Right as he defended in the Knesset his move to suspend the peace process, but his decision to support the early election initiative and detach it from a parliamentary no-confidence motion, was seen as a tacit admission that he could not secure majority support for it.

He had to break off as Dan Tichon, the Speaker, shouted above the chaos and ordered a brief adjournment. Downstairs a sticker posted up anonymously read "Come on, Sara, let's go home", a reference to the Prime Minister's wife.

Explaining Likud's about-turn on new elections, Silvan Shalom, the Science Minister and a staunch Netanyahu loyalist, said: "We are fed up with the kind of situation where we come to this building every morning and have to plan how to do everything to get a majority at the end of the day. These days are behind us. We are going to face a new election and we hope we will win."

## Chinese activists get long prison terms

FROM JAMES PRINGLE IN BEIJING

CHINESE courts, signalling that Beijing will stamp harshly on any possible challenge to its power, sentenced two leading human rights activists to long prison terms yesterday after trials lasting only a few hours, bringing protests from the United States and calling into question an apparent commitment by China's leaders to a more open system.

Xu Wen Li, 55, a veteran dissident who has already served a 12-year jail term for calling for democracy, denounced the Beijing court proceedings at which he was sentenced to a further 13 years in prison, calling it "political persecution". Xu said that his trial was illegal and refused to plead guilty or not guilty to subversion charges.

Another court, in the eastern city of Hengshou, jailed Wang Youcai, like Xu a leading member of a new political grouping, the Chinese Democratic Party, which aims to challenge the Communist Party's monopoly on power, to 11 years in prison. His trial had taken place last Thursday, with that of Qin Yongmin, another activist, in the industrial city of Wuhan. Mr Qin is awaiting his verdict.

The official Xinhua news agency quoted court verdicts as saying that Xu and Wang had accepted money from "foreign hostile organisations". The Beijing verdict said: "Attempting to overthrow the state, Xu in November secretly planned the formation of the so-called Chinese Democratic Party. To organise, plan and implement the overthrow of state power, Xu also accepted financial assistance from foreign hostile organisations."

The US Embassy in Beijing criticised Xu's 13-year term. "We hope this deplorable decision by the Beijing Intermediate Court will not be allowed to stand," an embassy spokesman said. "We are deeply disappointed both with the guilty verdict and the extremely harsh sentence given to Mr Xu."

The embassy said that nobody should be arrested, tried or sentenced for exercising internationally recognised freedoms, including those guaranteed in the United Nations international covenant on political rights, which China had signed last October.



Ibrahim al-Wahash, 23, who is hoping to become a teacher, with his family's flock on the hills around Bethlehem. Photographs: Paul Rogers

## Shepherds see the light on jobs

Watching flocks by day is a dying art amid the lure of more profitable work. In the first of three articles from Bible towns, Christopher Walker looks at Bethlehem

THE number of shepherds who tend their flocks on the hills around Bethlehem has slumped dramatically since their predecessors were told of the birth of Jesus nearly 2,000 years ago.

Fast dwindling also is the number of young men willing to take up the ancient vocation in this often parched region. This year's water shortage is so severe that the shepherds, most of them Muslims, now start every morning when they take out their flocks with an impassioned prayer for rain.

But Munib Toukan, a former public relations wizard for Royal Jordanian Airlines who was headhunted by the World Bank to lead the Bethlehem 2000 Project, is determined that the shepherds' story will start the festivities in this mainly Muslim West Bank town. It is hoped that millennium celebrations will put Bethlehem once again at the centre of world attention.

With his millennium clock ticking relentlessly away in his office, Mr Toukan, also a Muslim, outlined his plan. He admits that, with no contracts yet signed and Bethlehem the scene of daily riots between Palestinians and Israeli soldiers, the project is still at the dream stage.

The sweeping view from his window of the rocky pastures known as Shepherd's Field



Munib Toukan, head of the Bethlehem 2000 project, with the town's millennium logo

has inspired Mr Toukan. "The idea would be next Christmas Eve to kick-start the proceedings with the Three Tenors on a stage down there singing *Silent Night*," he said. A laser would then illuminate a "star" which would move until it was over the roof of the Church of the Nativity in Manger Square. "Everything would be televised," Mr Toukan said, with a variety of

international figures already invited to attend. The guest lists ranges from the Queen to President Yeltsin of Russia, who has agreed to head the honorary committee overseeing the whole event.

Mr Toukan exudes calm, even when his office still lacks proper flooring, when he is locked in dispute with Israel over a heavily armed roadblock through which all pil-

grims will have to pass, and Islamic militancy.

As street-fighting raged only a mile from his office, Mr Toukan handed out glossy folders about the project, boasting eventual financing of \$212 million (£132.5 million), and proclaiming: "Bethlehem will be the Star of the Millennium. Peoples and all faiths are invited to participate and share the celebra-

tions with the Palestinian people, and to make Bethlehem their place of annual pilgrimage thereafter."

Away from the dreams, the reality for Bethlehem's 20th-century shepherds is harsh. For Ibrahim al-Wahash, charged with overseeing the 120 sheep that make up his uncle's herd, work starts before dawn. In a good year he makes only a few thousand dollars from sheep's milk, cheese and the occasional lamb sold to butchers.

Such is the shortage of real shepherds around Bethlehem that local guides are charging foreign TV crews upwards of \$100 to find one who will agree to be filmed. Many who aspire to jobs in the self-rule Palestinian towns or in Israel find the whole idea of animal husbandry outdated and demeaning.

"Young men now want something more exciting in their lives, something that pays good money — even if that involves working for an Israeli," said Walid Salama, a teacher whose father is a retired shepherd.

Mr al-Wahash, 23, said: "I am hoping to be a teacher when I have got my qualifications. The family is behind me. They know shepherds here are a dying breed. Maybe in another ten years there will not be a single one left." □ Next: Nazareth.

### WORLD IN BRIEF

## Satellite watch on German railways

Bonn: Germany bought planes, helicopters and spy satellites into use to monitor its railways after three train mishaps, including a derailment, in the wake of blackmail threats against the rail company. The police said they were investigating whether the incidents were linked to threats to tamper with track unless DM10 million (£7 million) was handed over by the rail operator, Deutsche Bahn.

The Defence Ministry said air force Tornados would photograph 24,850 miles of track and at night would use infra-red cameras to check for signs of disturbance. Border guards were using helicopters to patrol the tracks. (Reuters)

## Heads — it's the Pope

Brussels: The Pope's head will be allowed on euro coins issued by the Vatican under a European Union scheme (Charles Bremner writes). It seeks to solve an argument with the Vatican, San Marino and Monaco — three micro-states outside the EU. The Vatican and San Marino have traditionally issued Italian lire coins with their own designs, and Monaco has used the French franc under an arrangement with Paris. The Commission proposal in effect admits the micro-states into the monetary union, provided they abide by all rules and let Italy and France supervise their coinage.

## TV watcher attacked

Jerusalem: Four ultra-orthodox Jews beat up a man, 79, and ransacked his home because he watched television on Saturday — the Jewish sabbath. Yitzhak Daniel Levy suffered broken legs and hands in the attack, which left the TV set, telephone and furniture damaged. It was the latest and most serious of incidents blamed on "modesty patrols" that have riven tensions between Orthodox and secular Jews here. Fires have also been started at the home of three Swiss Christian women suspected of trying to convert Jews, and the flat of a young man accused of abandoning his religion. (AFP)

## Nato chief in Belgrade

Belgrade: General Wesley Clark, right, the Nato commander, met Yugoslav military chiefs here amid reports that a Serbian policeman had been killed in Kosovo and the army had attacked ethnic Albanian guerrilla positions. The policeman was shot near Podujevo, Serbian and international sources said, and the Yugoslav Army attacked bunkers dug by separatist guerrillas north of the town. (Reuters)



## 'Colonel Passy' dies

Paris: André Dewavrin, better known as "Colonel Passy", the wartime head of the London-based Free French secret service has died aged 87, friends said. A career army officer, he was 29-year-old captain when General Charles de Gaulle, creator of the Free French movement, entrusted him with creating the Central Bureau for Intelligence and Action in June 1944. The bureau had a big part in creating the Resistance and gathering intelligence for the allies in occupied France throughout the 1940-1944 occupation. (Reuters) (Obituaries, page 1)

## Sole beneficiary plan

Seoul: Chung Kyu Chil, 51, hired an acquaintance to cut off his feet so he could collect £1.1 million in insurance. The South Korean grocer told police he discovered the loss when waking early on December 11 after a drinking bout. Police suspected creditors, his family saying that he owed £151,500 in stock market and gambling losses, but then found he had insurance policies that paid £1 million if he became disabled accidentally. The acquaintance faces assault charges, but Mr Chung is free as he has not tried to collect the money. (AP)

## 'Impersonators' hit by Santa clause

FROM ADAM SAGE IN PARIS

SANTA CLAUS is persona non grata in the French capital this Christmas — where he faces police harassment and scorn from toddlers. France's punctilious bureaucracy is clamping down on anyone daring to dress up as Father Christmas, threatening fines of up to Fr1,200 (£127).

Under a bylaw banning "disguises on the public highway outside carnival periods", Santas can be sanctioned for simply stepping outdoors, although police said they were tolerated as long as they did not try to profit from the costume. But woe-

ride anyone trying to engage in traditional activities such as posing for tourist snapshots. Police are under orders to enforce a second bylaw that prohibits "the taking of photographs without permission" and carries a Fr900 to Fr1,200 penalty.

One officer said the presence with the photographer of "an impersonator" — a term used to describe suspects in a long red coat and white beard — was an aggravating factor likely to push the fine towards the top end of the scale.

Bruno, a Gallic Father Christmas interviewed by *Le Figaro* yesterday, said he charged Fr50 for a photograph and had

been fined at least once a week over the festive period.

He cannot even hope for sympathy from French youngsters. Department stores that traditionally employ a Santa have been refusing to renew contracts, bowing to customer pressure. One, La Samaritaine, said: "We realised last year that he did not have the same success anymore." The Left Bank chic Bon Marché agreed, saying: "Too many Father Christmases kill the spirit of Father Christmas."

Anyway, today's children are "too materialist" to believe in him, according to La Samaritaine.



Padre Pio: healing attributed to him

## Pope to beatify stigmata priest

FROM JOHN PHILLIPS IN ROME

THE beatification of Padre Pio was decided by the Pope yesterday after the Roman Catholic Church ruled that the miraculous healing of a young woman attributed to the southern Italian mystic was authentic.

The Vatican said that the beatification, the last stage towards becoming a saint, would take place in Rome on May 2. The Pope approved a

decree recognising the recovery of Consiglia De Martino, a supermarket worker from near Salerno, had taken place solely through the intercession of the Capuchin priest, who died in 1968.

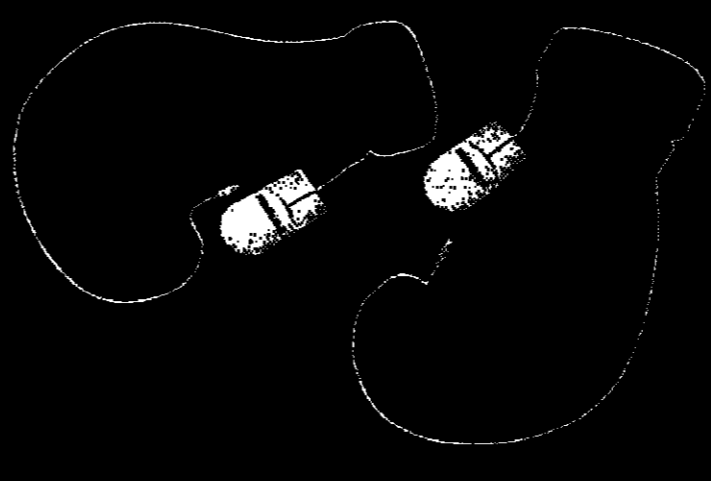
Bells were rung and fireworks set off at Padre Pio's birthplace at Pietrelcina in the southern province of Benevento in celebration of the news.

Padre Pio began attracting devoted followers after he developed, at 31, stigmata —

bleeding wounds — on his hands, feet and thighs that were considered to be like the wounds of the crucified Christ.

Signora De Martino, now 46, says that she appealed successfully to Padre Pio for help in November 1995 while awaiting surgery for a life-threatening lymph gland disorder. "He came to me in a dream, he touched me on the neck and the chest and said, 'You don't need an operation any more!'"

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Ex-F... beg... head... Peru 'in drive to sterilise the poor'

# Ex-Presidents beg Senate to heal nation

THE former Presidents Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter weighed in to the impeachment debate yesterday with a blueprint for "healing the nation" through a swift bipartisan end to the crisis.

The two respected elder statesmen, from opposite ends of the political spectrum, proposed that the Senate should move quickly to censure Mr Clinton and spare the country a trial. Mr Clinton would have to accept a rebuke and acknowledge he lied under oath.

It was suggested that the resolution should stipulate that an admission of lying could not then be used against him in a criminal trial for perjury. The initiative by the two former Presidents, outlined in an article in *The New York Times*, adds momentum to attempts by other senior political figures to find a cross-party solution to a saga that the public dearly wants to forget.

Mr Ford, the conservative Republican who pardoned Richard Nixon, and Mr Carter, the liberal Democrat who granted an amnesty for those who avoided the Vietnam call-up, were foes in the 1976 presidential election from which Mr Carter emerged victorious.

**Ford and Carter want to spare Clinton a trial, writes Damian Whitworth**

They referred to their decisions about Nixon and Vietnam as attempts to heal national divisions and implored the Senate to act in a similar way. "In the wake of President Clinton's impeachment by the House of Representatives, America once again suffers from a grievous and deepening wound. Our people are angrily divided," they said.

With few people convinced that the requisite two thirds of the 100-member Senate would vote to convict Mr Clinton on the two articles of impeachment passed amid great rancour by the House of Representatives, the two former Presidents argued that a trial should be avoided.

"It seems inevitable that by rehashing the lurid evidence of President Clinton's misconduct, we will only exacerbate

the jagged divisions that are tearing at our national fabric," they said. "Make no mistake, the judgment of history does matter. It matters profoundly. And impeachment by the full House has already brought profound disgrace to President Clinton. Whatever happens now will do little to affect history's judgment of him."

The sticking point in the deal is still likely to be eliciting an admission from Mr Clinton that he lied. "The notion that he's going to come forward and say he's lied is not going to happen. He's not going to concede he lied to the Grand Jury, because he did not," Gregory Craig, one of the President's lawyers, said.

Mr Craig said Mr Clinton's legal team was preparing for a trial that is expected to open shortly after January 6 when the new Senate convenes. The White House was reported yesterday to be considering a legal fight to make the new House of Representatives, which will contain more Democrats, vote on impeachment.

Mr Clinton's spokesman would say only that the lawyers are reviewing all their options. Certainly, discussions are being held with key members of the Senate about reaching a bipartisan compromise, something Orrin Hatch, the Republican chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, and others have already suggested is possible.

George Mitchell, the former Senate majority leader and chairman of the Northern Ireland peace process, has been advising the President how to work towards an agreement.

A censure would allow Mr Clinton to keep his job: after he was impeached he said that he had no intention of relinquishing it. Nor do Americans want him to. A poll for *USA Today* and *CNN* indicated that after impeachment his approval rating has climbed to 73 per cent, his highest yet.



President and Hillary Clinton, accompanied by Dan Glickman, left, the US Agriculture Secretary, arrive at an emergency shelter in Washington yesterday where they volunteered to prepare food for the homeless. In the aftermath of the congressional impeachment proceedings, Mr Clinton will also spend the run-up to Christmas reading to children and paying homage to the victims of the 1988 Pan Am Lockerbie plane bombing

## Fury as friend of Bill says critic should be stoned



Kal's view in the *Baltimore Sun* of President Clinton's determination to stay in office

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

HOLLYWOOD'S top lobbyist in Washington has chastised Alec Baldwin, the Hollywood actor, for suggesting that Henry Hyde — chairman of the House Judiciary Committee which voted to impeach President Clinton — and his family should be stoned to death.

The actor's publicist protested that the comment about Mr Hyde was meant in jest. But Jack Valenti, president of the Motion Picture Association of America, said friends of his on both sides of Congress had complained to him about Mr Baldwin's com-

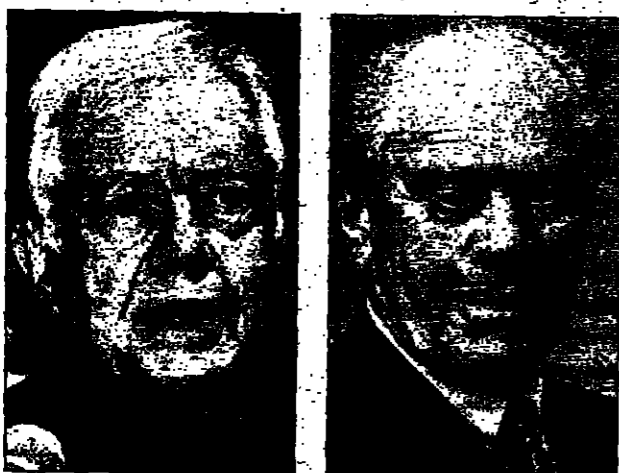
ments on NBC's *Late Night with Conan O'Brien*. During a guest appearance, Mr Baldwin, who is married to Kim Basinger, said that in other countries Mr Hyde and his family would be stoned to death.

Mr Valenti said the comment was too incendiary to be parody and "so off-base and over the top as to boggle the mind". Mr Valenti's role is to keep relations smooth between Congress and the film and television industry, although he did not write to Mr Baldwin on behalf of his association but as a friend, he said. He admitted he had not seen the skit.

Mr Baldwin and his wife are among a Hollywood set close to Mr Clinton. They were host to the President and Hillary Clinton for a lavish fundraiser at their home in the Hamptons on Long Island during the summer.

Mr Hyde is one of four Congressional Republicans who have recently admitted illicit sex. They include Indiana's Dan Burton, who admitted to fathering a child out of wedlock.

Hours before the House of Representatives voted to impeach Mr Clinton on two of four articles against him, the incoming Republican Speaker, Bob Livingston of Louisiana, resigned and urged the President to do the same.



Carter, left, and Ford are insisting that Clinton must acknowledge that he lied under oath

# Republicans count the costs of pursuing a popular leader

REPUBLICANS who frustrated themselves for impeaching President Clinton may soon be wondering if their victory was too costly. New polls show that their support is plummeting in a public backlash over their insistence on sending Mr Clinton for trial in the Senate and refusing to accept a vote of censure as an alternative.

Yesterday the party received another dose of bad news. David Duke, a Republican and former Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan, announced that he would run for the congressional seat be-

Public backlash turns Congress triumph into disaster, writes Ian Brodie in Washington

ing vacated by Bob Livingston, the Speaker-elect who resigned on Saturday after being forced to disclose extramarital affairs.

Republicans moved swiftly to distance themselves from Mr Duke, who has proved an embarrassment before. Jim Nicholson, the Republican National Chairman, said: "There is no room in the party of Lincoln for a Klansman like David

Duke." Although Mr Duke is denounced as a neo-Nazi by his foes, he attracted a surprising number of white votes when he ran in 1990 for the Senate and the following year for the governorship of Louisiana.

Nationally, according to polls, fewer than one in three voters now has a favourable view of the Republican Party, its lowest rating for six years. In just the last week, the

numbers have slumped from 49 to 39 per cent among men and from 38 per cent to 24 per cent among women in polls conducted for *CNN* and *USA Today*.

At the same time, President Clinton has soared to a record 73 per cent approval rating. Other polls showed similarly gloomy results for Republicans. Many Republicans in Congress feel that their show of unity during last Saturday's impeachment vote was their finest hour. But many Republicans outside Washington disagree.

George Bush Jr, the Governor

of Texas and the leading Republican presidential contender for 2000, has said nothing of late in support of impeachment. Republican governors elsewhere have been equally muted.

Congressional Republicans are hoping that their zealotry in going after President Clinton will be forgotten and their standing restored before the next election in two years.

It is a gamble that they could lose if the Senate trial becomes a drawn-out affair that hobbles all other legislation. Collaboration between Re-

publicans and Mr Clinton on the passage of healthcare, taxation and other issues seems increasingly unlikely. "I don't see how you can meet the President in the morning to ask for his co-operation, then impeach him in the afternoon," said Charles Rangel, a Democrat in Congress.

In pursuing impeachment, Republicans ignored a warning sign in the November election when Democrats gained five House seats, reducing the Republican majority from 11 to six and prompting the resignation of Newt Gingrich

as Speaker. After the election, Ralph Reed, a Republican consultant, warned party leaders in a memorandum that preoccupation with felling a popular president was a "strategic blindness" which was hurting their interests.

Conservative Republicans are still insisting that their refusal to be guided by opinion polls is to their credit. Whitman Ayres, a Republican pollster, is unconvinced. "Generally, there is not much to be gained politically by driving an issue that's only supported by one third of the electorate," he said.

## Peru 'in drive to sterilise the poor'

BY GABRIELLA GAMINI SOUTH AMERICA CORRESPONDENT

A HUMAN rights group in Peru has accused President Fujimori's Government of conducting forced sterilisations on more than 250,000 women in poor Andean villages and city shanty towns.

Testimony by thousands of women — given during an investigation by the Latin American and Caribbean Committee for the Defence of Women's Rights — led to allegations of "a systematic forced sterilisation programme".

Its report, to be published in February, says that for three years operations have been carried out "under threat and coercion". It indicates that the Government got itself the task of reducing families to 2.5 children a couple by 2000. To achieve that, it targeted poor illiterate Quechua and Aymara women, who traditionally have more than five children.

Peru has a population of 26 million, including more than six million women of fertile age, and more than half live in poverty.

The investigation began in 1996 after Gutilla Tamayo, a women's rights activist and lawyer, found documents outlining a Health and Family Programme (1996-2000) when inspecting a Piura district clinic.

## Hoodlums can boost firepower on Internet

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

THE home page dribbles into view trying hard to be festive. First a tree appears, then decorations, then the message: "Taurus is pleased to join in the holiday spirit. With the purchase of any new Taurus handgun you receive a gift from us. Don't miss out!"

Time may already be short, but Christmas shopping for one's friends in the underworld has never been so easy. From sniper's rifles to knives, hunting crossbows to electric stun guns, the gift for the hoodlum who has everything is now available in cyberspace.

In half an hour on the Internet this week I could have equipped a small invasion force. Even for novice arms dealers, high-powered Mark 1 Neutralizer rifles at \$4,200 (£2,625) each, and accurate in the right hands to a thousand yards "to get the job done right first time", were but a few clicks away with your favourite browser.

M16 assault rifles, tried and tested by the US Army, are available direct from the manufacturer, thanks to a helpful online order form. Likewise handguns, night sights, specialised ammunition and, with a little perseverance, most materiel from the disused Soviet war machine: up to and including fighter planes.

There is a hitch. Most American dealers and manufacturers will send lethal weapons only to other dealers, from whom they have requested a Federal Firearms Licence. Number on their electronic order forms. This month the FBI



A metal crossbow and powerful Neutralizer gun, two of the deadly weapons for sale on the Internet

also introduced a long-awaited "Instacheck" system to check gun buyers' backgrounds against an exhaustive database of known felons, from gang members and white-batters to paid assassins.

The system, condemned by the gun lobby as an unwarranted addition to existing laws, crashed on its first day. "It was a disaster," said Ron Kesseling, a major Seattle-area dealer. It has since run more smoothly, vetting virtual as well as face-to-face arms sales across the country.

In the gun trade, as in online pornography, however, the Internet remains America's murkiest area for jurisdiction. "If you buy a gun on the Internet you have to go through a licensed dealer — if you're abiding by the law," said Will Winton, an Internet

specialist at Handgun Control, the pressure group set up by Sarah Brady of the Brady Assault Weapons Bill. "But there's a huge loophole."

Like the Brady Bill, the Instacheck system makes an exception of guns sales between so-called "private collectors". Such sales remain largely unregulated, with the Internet linking bona fide collectors and unscrupulous dealers as never before. The result: "People are getting away with selling lots of guns, no questions asked," Mr Winton said.

Online shopping could be worth more than \$100 billion a year by 2002, *Newsweek* estimated in a recent cover story headlined: Xmas.com. If so, most of the money will change hands in squeaky-clean cyber-mails run by bright young billionaires.

## Moscow threat on embassy security

FROM ANNA BLUNDY IN MOSCOW

RUSSIA'S Interior Ministry has threatened to remove its security guards from outside the US Embassy in Moscow in protest at the US State Department's withdrawal of police guards from the Russian Embassy in Washington DC.

Ironically, it is the Americans who are pleading financial difficulties during Russia's worst economic crisis since the end of communism.

In the 1960s the Soviet Embassy in Washington was regularly vandalised by opponents of the regime and was often the centre of anti-communist demonstrations. In Russia the US Embassy fared little better, with taxi-drivers breaking through its gates and Jewish refuseniks trying to storm its compound to reach safety. More recently a grenade was thrown through a window, although nobody was injured.

The newspaper *Novie Izvestia* reported that James Collins, the US Ambassador to Moscow, has asked the Interior Ministry to reconsider and increase rather than decrease the level of security around his embassy. He expressed the hope that the Russians in Washington would come to a mutually satisfactory agreement with the authorities.

Yuri Vorontsov, the Russian Ambassador to Washington, was recalled to Moscow last week "for consultations" as part of Russia's stand against the joint US-British bombing of Iraq.



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# Life, labour and love at face value

**By Christmas, Fiona Elliott will have spent £2,000 on looking good. Interview by Anjana Ahuja**

**F**iona Elliott floats elegantly into the room and takes a seat at the mahogany table. Dressed in a smart navy pin-striped jacket, short skirt and high heels, she is also wearing a fixed, serene expression. That's because the space between her eyebrows has been injected with botulinum toxin (Botox), to freeze her frown muscles. "It stops me scowling, so I don't get lines," she explains, sipping herbal tea from a china mug.

The Botox injections are just one weapon in an armoury of treatments that she has undergone during the past eight weeks as a precursor to the Christmas party season. During numerous visits to the Alternative Medicine Clinic in Central London — run by Sally Gilbert Wilson — Elliott has had two chemical peels, and had her eyes, cheeks and lips injected with Restylane to plump them up.

Her quest for enhanced beauty doesn't stop at the neck. Raising her skirt by a few inches to show off a pair of perfectly acceptable thighs, she adds: "I don't like my legs up here so I'm having injections to budge the fat. I have some skirts that I can't fit into, and I refuse to throw them away. And there is a particular suit I want to wear when I spend Christmas Day with my family." She should finish the 23-day course, and accompanying 600-calorie-a-day diet, just in time for Christmas pudding, brandy butter and mince pies.

When Elliott, 34, has completed the catalogue of cosmetic treatments, she will not have much change left from £2,000. Wouldn't she prefer to spend it on a foreign holiday or a small hatchback? She adopts the calm, assured manner of a financial adviser discussing pensions. "It's a good investment," she says. "I'm planning for the future. I don't want to get to 40 or 45 and think 'I should have had this or that done'. I don't want to



PETER NICHOLS

Skin deep: "It's not a matter of being frightened of ageing. It's wanting to grow old gracefully and wanting to take care of yourself. I wouldn't do anything that looked unnatural," says Fiona Elliott

have a surgeon say to me 'Sorry, but I can't perform miracles'." She is not averse to the occasional course of Gerovital H3 injections, touted as an anti-ageing cure-all and energy booster. She will happily go under the knife, if need be, in years to come. She has chosen her guide through the coming years with wisdom — Sally Gilbert Wilson, a bejewelled blonde, certainly does not look as though she is six years into owning a bus pass.

Elliott continues: "It's not a matter of being frightened of ageing. It's wanting to grow old gracefully and wanting to take care of yourself. I wouldn't do anything that looked unnatural, and I trust Sally completely. I appreciate that some people can help me to take care of myself better than I can on my own. When I reach 70 I want to look a good 70. I want people to think 'Hasn't she got style?'" Take care of herself she certainly does.

She prefers fresh fruit and vegetables to junk food, has never smoked and rarely lets alcohol pass her enhanced lips. She exercises for at least 15 minutes each day, and meditates at her riverside flat in West London. Her sharp crop is cut and coloured by her Mayfair hairdresser every five weeks, her eyebrows and eyelashes are darkened regularly and she enjoys a monthly facial, ensuring that she is always turned out im-

maculately for work (she is the PA to a well-known peer). She scours boutiques for additions to her extensive wardrobe. Not even her car keys have escaped a makeover — they rest snugly in a Louis Vuitton key-case. However, she does not come across as a style snob: "I like Karen Millen, too. I only worry about having good jackets, bags and shoes."

Since most women, for better or for worse, end up looking like their mothers, perhaps Elliott Sr has a few wrinkles? It seems not. "My mother looks very good actually," Fiona reflects. "I suppose there's a subconscious desire to emulate her as I get older. The problem is, she has cheekbones like tent pegs. Mine aren't as high as hers, so I need help. She does say to me 'Oh darling, you don't need it, but she knows it's the kind of thing I would do. I simply tell my father that 'a little now means less later.'"

She started taking her own advice on the day she turned 30, when she treated herself to her first chemical peel as a birthday present. Gilbert Wilson nods approvingly: "I think the mid to late twenties is a good time to take stock because the pace of life is so hectic. We are surrounded by pollution, air-conditioning and chemicals. They take their toll on hair, skin and energy lev-

els. We get people in at 24 or 25 who are knackered."

Elliott only recently told her partner of a year, who works in publishing, about her cosmetic philosophy: "I didn't tell him I was coming here, and when I got home he noticed my face and eyes were red. He asked if I had been crying, and I had to tell him. He was OK about it. He loves me enough to let me be my own person."

He doesn't talk about it with her girlfriends, just as she doesn't tell them when she visits the hairdresser. "Were I having a facelift, I'd tell them because I would want them to send get-well cards. But I don't think of this as a big deal. And I appreciate that some friends have other responsibilities and may not have the money. That's not to say I feel guilty, rather that I am sensitive."

The benefits, she adds, are more than cosmetic. They include enhanced confidence and "a greater shelf life" as a working woman: "I'm approaching 35 and want to continue working. I'm thinking ahead. I want to get married and have children, but even then I would want to carry on working. But I don't want my husband to turn round and say 'You used to look so glamorous'. I don't want to look as though I have had a hard life."



"I don't want to look as though I've had a hard life"

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CHANGING TIMES

## Eve of destruction

**C**hristmas Eve is the great day on much of the Continent. The different emphasis given to Christmas Day and Christmas Eve is not the only contrast between the festivities on mainland Europe and in the British Isles. The trenchermen and women of Germany, the Low Countries and France will be unwitting indigestion by swallowing capsules of pancreatic enzymes with their gargantuan meals. They are not going to leave their digestive processes to chance.

They hope that the magic pills will improve fat, carbohydrate and protein digestion, improve absorption and decrease steatorrhoea (fatty stools). The pancreatic extracts will, they confidently expect, alleviate some of the ill-effects of overeating by reducing feelings of bloatedness and abdominal pain, thereby enabling those who have overindulged to be altogether more comfortable — and more fragrant — as they sit around beneath their Christmas trees.

The pancreas is long, thin and shaped like a leaf, albeit more like an oak leaf than a holly leaf. It lies transversely across the mid-line of the upper abdomen, below the stomach, partially surrounded by the small intestine — the duodenum is moulded around its broadest part.

A duct runs down the centre of the pancreas with collecting ducts leading into it, looking rather like the veins on a leaf, before draining into the duodenum. In addition, scattered areas of the pancreas — the islets of Langerhans — secrete insulin, which controls the level of sugar in the

blood. At a conference in Germany last year, I was surprised by the great faith that my German colleagues placed in extracts of pancreatic enzymes. They, in turn, were surprised by how little interest British doctors took in the subject.

Although it was only a frivolous example of this difference, they told me that they might well take pancreatic extracts when intent on a heavy evening, whereas Britons would take precautions by drinking a glass of milk and, after the damage had been done, some antacids, soluble aspirin and something to steady the stomach (plus a pint of water) before going to bed. In their opinion, their forward planning was more logical as it endeavoured to prevent part of the digestive problems that follow eating too richly or too much.

The use of extracts of pancreatic enzymes is not, of course, only or mainly for those who overdo the celebrations. It is of great help to people who suffer from pancreatic insufficiency — whose pancreases fail to produce enough of the pancreatic enzymes essential for the digestion of carbohydrates, protein and fat. The pancreas is the most important digestive gland in the body and produces more than 30 enzymes; each of which is responsible for the digestion of some part of the menu.

In general, the main enzymes are amylase, which deals with the carbohydrates; trypsin for digesting proteins and lipase for digesting fats. The digestion of the fats is particularly important and in this process lipase works in conjunction with bile acids. If the lipase is in short supply,

the stools become fatty and offensive — the trouble signs most patients notice.

Our European colleagues suggest that in all countries, pancreatic insufficiency — the production of too few pancreatic enzymes — is underdiagnosed. If a patient has had his pancreas removed, the diagnosis is, of course, obvious. Likewise, pancreatic insufficiency is responsible for an important part of the problems associated with cystic fibrosis. The third common cause is chronic pancreatitis, and it is this condition which can be overlooked.

It is, indeed, probable that minor degrees of chronic pancreatitis are not diagnosed. Careful post-mortem examinations show that 5 per cent of all subjects have evidence of undiagnosed chronic pancreatitis.

The missed diagnosis occurs because the symptoms are non-specific, are not usually sufficiently severe to warrant detailed investigation and, even if they were too insensitive to detect minor degrees of enzyme deficiency.

In mild degrees of chronic inflammation of the pancreas, there may be no more than a feeling of fullness, nausea, indigestion, loss of appetite and an increased quantity of fatty stools — symptoms possibly induced by food intolerance.

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# The lost art of hosting a good party

Giving a party to enjoy yourself misses the point. The object is to please friends, says Ewa Lewis

**H**ow many Christmas parties in the past two weeks have you actually enjoyed? Were there any at which you were warmly welcomed by your host and introduced to some interesting people? Or have you been left helplessly seeking a familiar face?

In the past ten years I have observed the bear years of party life as well as the bull years and have often felt a keen sense of loss and a yearning for the prewar style and manners of entertaining, which my generation only occasionally catches a glimpse of.

What I am more likely to see today is a guest left kicking his heels in a corner, or the unfortunate floundering amid a barrage of shop-talk. While one embraces the cosy comfort of the informally structured "supper in the kitchen, wear what you like" there is still the wistful desire to feel cosseted.

The great prewar hostesses like Sybil Colefax and Nancy Cunard would have gracefully sidestepped any pitfalls. The art of conversation was all, so that no one should be left out, and the hostesses would monitor who should speak to whom before dinner, ensuring that dining companions didn't run out of conversation. She would also indicate to which side the diner should talk. Some even made notes beforehand in order to steer conversation on to general topics.

There are still great hostesses

today, but in superior numbers are those who give a party to enjoy themselves, which misses the point. The object is to please your friends.

To receive guests is to be ritually bound to them for the evening. The host is giving, the guests receiving and are at the host's mercy as to how he will treat them, all of which creates a psychological imbalance which the guest can even out by singing for his supper.

Whatever the situation, it is up to the host to welcome his guest as if it were the greatest honour. Each one should feel remembered and exceptional, as if they were the very person their host most wanted.

This, however, becomes more complicated with the postwar vogue for the big cocktail party, to some a fate worse than death. Elsa Maxwell felt that it was "easily the worst invention since castor oil". For those in the nodding and smiling business, it has become a simple way of repaying debts to those whom you don't wish to invite to dinner. Squashed up like piglets in a litter, shouting at forte pitch and grasping the odd sally of wit over the din, there must be something to recommend it, else why would so many otherwise sane people keep up the tradition?

Nicholas Coleridge, managing director of Condé Nast, is in favour "if they serve cocktails". A charming gladiator on these occasions, he manages to work the room with the



A glass without class: despite the good cheer, today one is more likely to see a guest left kicking his heels in a corner, or the unfortunate floundering amid a barrage of shop-talk

speed of a comet. Short conversations with many people, especially the hostess, he feels will make sufficient impact. I have learnt much from him and am able to go to two or three cocktail parties in an evening and still be home in time for *The Bill*.

The killer for this strategy is the overzealous hostess whose single aim appears not to let anyone be happy. As soon as two people start enjoying their conversation, along she comes with Mr Boring. Countess Alexander believes in introducing people to each other but thinks "it is important to interpret your guests' wishes and read whether they wish to be introduced or moved". Braille would probably be the answer. Then you could feel their muscle tension and have

some fun yourself, too. But she has hit the nail on the head. Thoughtfulness about what others would like is the centrepiece of the good hostess puzzle. When Napoleon arrived to visit the King of Saxony, he found a party in progress. The King took him aside and showed him to an ante-room with a chamber pot. "I've often found," he said, "that even great men sometimes need to be alone."

You don't have to give many parties to be a good hostess. A good occasion remains in the memory for a long time. Lady Hindlip says: "You are usually

To receive guests is to be ritually bound to them

good at doing what you like doing." It is true that those who dislike social life are unlikely to give a good party. The hostess must give the impression of being carefree and enjoying the occasion.

The good hostess will tell her guests what to wear, for even though good company is more important than being dressed correct-

ly, it still makes people feel more secure. The most exceptional thoughtfulness was observed when one gentleman of high quality welcomed a guest and found that he was wearing casual clothes while every-

one else was in black tie. Quietly the host slipped away and returned dressed in his casuals.

Although parties do display the fruits of hard work and success, they are not supposed to be a boast of riches. This isn't to suggest that you shouldn't spoil your guests. If you can afford to give a Babylonian orgy in a two-tiered marquee with fireworks to music, it will be an occasion. Nero had ceilings of ivory panels that would shower guests with flowers or sprinkle exotic scents on them. Jools Holland simply strews his table with rose petals.

In other words give the best you can. There is a difference between being mean and being strapped. No one minds the latter but despises the former. I'm often asked what makes a good party that flows

easily for its hostess and in truth sometimes I don't know. The single, most vital, element is probably the hostess's guest list. A party which she gives to demand attention or use as an enhancement of status by getting the "right" people may not be the most enjoyable.

A good hostess will see her party as a celebration of relationships among the guests and an expression of sympathy and consensus on basic principles of the group.

A kindred spirit is essential for each person. The good hostess will invite those who will want to please the others or learn something from them. Coleridge says his dream hostess is one who introduces him to someone he had always

wanted to meet and then to find he would like to see them again. "It rarely happens," he says.

Numbers are always open to debate. Disraeli thought that "no more than the muses" was ideal. Another hostess makes a point of weighing up personalities and works to the formula of "three shouters to five listeners".

Finally, bear in mind that in Ancient Greece the biggest insult a hostess could bestow was to murder her guest, while the villagers of the Caucasus think that whoever comes into your house should be treated with great hospitality — but the minute he leaves you can slit his throat.

● Ewa Lewis is the social editor of *Tatler*

## Jingle Bells, maestro?

**L**ong evenings, a captive audience of relatives to impress, dozens of carols and Christmas hymns to choose from. No better season for a pianist to shine, I reasoned — if only someone could teach me to play.

I had been fingering the keys for five minutes when Richard Meyrick gently shooed me aside. "Let me show you how it can sound," he smiled. With a swish of his jacket tails — a mariner honed over years of practice — he took his place at the grand piano and launched into the most magical solo I had ever heard.

For a minute or two, the small Central London studio hemmed in by Sixties council blocks became the Wigmore Hall, and the bust of Apollo, the god of music, that stood in the corner appeared to smile. Then, after a few minutes of musical bliss, it was back to reality with me, a novice, trying to hammer out *Jingle Bells* with one finger.

Amazingly, Richard, an international concert pianist for 25 years, has chosen to initiate ignoramuses such as myself into the joys of the piano, offering "Learn a Christmas Carol" gift packages. His change in di-

rection was forged seven years ago, when — at the age of 39 — he had thyroid cancer diagnosed. It threatened to end his professional playing career, which started at 16 when he won a scholarship to the Royal



Keyboard skills are a great social asset at Christmas time

College of Music. "I was having radiotherapy every six months for three or four years," says Richard, now 46. "My fingers stiffened up and I couldn't play the piano."

He was given the all-clear three years ago but making a comeback to the world stage proved difficult. "I had done five big recitals at the Queen Elizabeth Hall but was unable to capitalise on that exposure because of the illness," he reflects. "I began to get more involved on the teaching side."

Now he divides his time between Gravesend, where he and his wife Felicity, a former violinist, run a teaching practice, and London. On a typical day he rises at 7am, practises for three hours, then hops on his motorbike for the 40-minute journey to a studio lent by the Golden Lane Estate, near the Barbican. On arrival he swaps his motorcycle gear for a suit and welcomes judges, solicitors and merchant bankers for lunchtime tuition. At 3pm he packs his suit into the piano, whizzes back to Gravesend and teach-

es until 8.30pm. "I know I'm a workaholic," he says, "but because of the illness, I don't want to waste a minute."

It takes only one lesson to appreciate why he is in demand. By the time my first hour is up, I can read the rudiments of sheet music and have mastered a one-hand version of *Jingle Bells*. He has improved my sense of timing with some clapping sessions, and encouraged me to hit the keys with gusto instead of embarrassment. There is a little of the schoolmaster in him, too — I didn't dare come to the second lesson without having practised on my own modest piano, inherited in a house move.

During the second lesson we played a duet of *O Come All Ye Faithful*. I shall never forget it. And once I could play a little, I began to understand the lure of it all — how nothing matters except the notes you are playing at that moment, the undivided attention you must pay to every key, the sheer joy of getting the notes right and hearing music of your own making. No wonder that City folk, from absolute beginners to those whose efforts would not sound out of place in a concert hall, flock to this musical haven.

"People love it," Richard says. "It's a way for them to be creative, totally absorbed. And it is so different from their normal environment that it is relaxing." In fact, several of his students are so gifted that Richard has asked them to play in a charity concert in the City next year. Just two lessons and his effusive encouragement have

changed my life. I no longer regard the ancient wooden box in my living room as an enemy. My amateur, jangly carols are the best Christmas presents I could have given to my mother, who always wanted me to learn the piano. I will never make Apollo smile, but I will certainly bring an added sparkle to my family's Christmas celebrations this year.

● An initial one-hour consultation with Richard Meyrick is £60. Details: 0800-731 5453

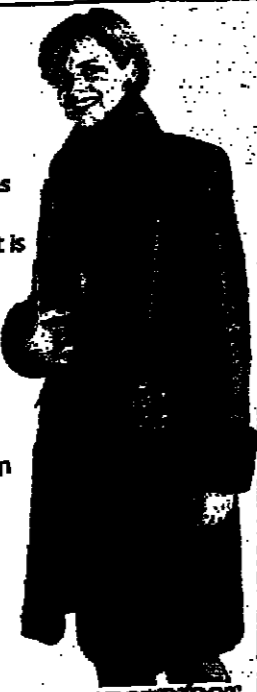
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# PEOPLE OF THE CENTURY

### Christmas reflections on some unexpected movers and shakers

History has never been made solely by the captains and the kings. They always strode a crowded stage. Great 20th-century historians, Edward Thompson's *The Making of the English Working Class*, Simon Schama's distillation of 16th-century Holland, John Hale's survey of the European Renaissance or Richard Cobb's worm's-eye view of the French Revolution, celebrate that truth. This century has certainly been rich in public figures as great, or terrible, as any: in one scale there are Roosevelt, Churchill, Gandhi, Gorbachev; in the other, Lenin, Stalin, Hitler, Mao. Two powerfully destructive ideologies, fascism and communism, have risen and returned to dust; socialism has had its apogee and transformation.

Yet conversely, this has been the people's century, a time when the political drama has filled out with actors who once had only walk-on parts. The protean Establishment has been reshaped by its critics, as networks of people and institutions have come to include quangos, tribunals, unions or lions of popular culture. Authority has been challenged, by a vigorous sense of personal liberty, to justify its conventions as well as its laws both nationally and, under the banner of human rights, worldwide. Leisure is no longer associated with privilege, thanks to higher wages, cheap travel and labour-saving gadgets. Dress codes now are more a street language than a social definition.

In this age of individualism, it is to some of the individuals who in each decade have rung the changes in our minds that we turn our Christmas thoughts. Few of them belong in history's roll-call of the obvious. For the 1900s, we have chosen the 2nd Lord Escher, the democratic courtier who spanned the Victorian and Edwardian reigns and who, as Edward VII's close adviser, steered that somewhat erratic monarch through the post-1906 constitu-

tional upheavals. In the decade of the Great War, we look at Emmeline Pankhurst, figurehead of female emancipation, though in truth women won the vote more out of respect for their war work than because of her famous stunt chained to railings. We fit through the Roaring Twenties, via Bloomsbury into the Long Barn and Sissinghurst gardens of Vita Sackville-West, flapper, writer, lesbian extraordinary but most durably an inspiration to the thousands of green fingers who have made garden centres 20th-century social institutions.

Who now remembers Mr Smoot? We do; and we profile the obscure American senator who in the 1930s gave the world the Great Depression. Equally influential and almost as forgotten is Werner von Braun, the German nuclear boffin who became midwife to the nuclear age. Then, as we survey the ending of wartime austerity in this country, the flavour of the Fifties is literally captured by Elizabeth David. In the Sixties, there was the Pill, flower power and Vietnam; but there was also a sound electric guitar. After flower power, flower tenders: the ideas planted by Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* germinated in the 1970s into the environmental movement. In the 1980s, we could have made stoned talk as the Berlin Wall fell. Instead we listen to the canary in the Soviet cage; the courageous voice of another nuclear scientist, Andrei Sakharov, heralded the Cold War's end. We close the century that began with political revolutionaries with very different mould-breaker - Jerry Yang, whose Yahoo! search engine on the Internet opens up personal choices and discoveries that in the next century could make the horizons of the 20th seem oddly restricted. Ours is a metaphorical website. Others will have different icons of hidden history. Let each reader's search begin.



In this age of individualism, it is to some of the individuals who in each decade have rung the changes in our minds that we turn our Christmas thoughts. Few of them belong in history's roll-call of the obvious. For the 1900s, we have chosen the 2nd Lord Escher, the democratic courtier who spanned the Victorian and Edwardian reigns and who, as Edward VII's close adviser, steered that somewhat erratic monarch through the post-1906 constitu-

## DIPLOMATIC OFFENSIVE

### Britain will have to work hard to regain the initiative

War may be a martial continuation of diplomacy, but after the airstrikes on Iraq, Britain needs to put its diplomacy on a war footing. The Government has insisted that the British and American strikes achieved their aim: the degradation of Saddam's military assets and the weakening of the pillars of his regime. It also maintains that there is widespread support abroad for the military action and the timing. If so, the Government needs to call on its allies to speak out more forcefully to convince their wavering public opinion. And Robin Cook now faces a huge postwar challenge: the building of a new diplomatic consensus on containing Saddam.

However much the missiles have set back Saddam's military capacity, in the short term they have also inflicted damage on Britain's diplomatic standing. Moscow has withdrawn its Ambassador from London. The Muslim world is in uproar. European allies are grumbling that they were not properly informed. And President Milosevic of Yugoslavia is meanwhile absorbing the lessons of Saddam's self-proclaimed propaganda victory.

Much of this was anticipated. Britain knew that there would be little overt backing, even in the Gulf, for its actions. Street demonstrations can leave Britain looking isolated; much more important is the private assurance from Arab leaders that Saddam had only himself to blame, and that they welcome any action to reduce his regional threat. Moscow has felt frustrated as much by Saddam as by its inability to protect him in the Security Council. Even as Yuri Fokine was leaving London in response to President Yeltsin's

outburst, Russian officials were signalling that this did not mean a breakdown in co-operation elsewhere and that they were ready to join a postwar consensus. And while some believe that Mr Milosevic may feel emboldened to thumb his nose at the West in Kosovo, others argue that he will now be less willing to risk his military assets to Western strikes.

Defining the means to enforce containment will not be easy. It will be harder still to ensure that the diplomatic initiative does not slip elsewhere. Already there is a mood within the United Nations to dump Richard Butler, head of the weapons inspection team. With siren hints from Baghdad that inspectors could return provided he is not among them, British and American determination not to allow Saddam to dictate terms will be severely strained. France, whose equivocation during the war says little for the vaunted closer defence co-operation outlined in St Malo, is seeking political - and trade - profit in the Arab world. Already President Chirac has called for a comprehensive review of sanctions, a step that could fatally undermine the eight-year unanimity on maintaining the embargo.

Mr Cook insists that British resolution is widely admired abroad. He is right. Commentators and public figures - from Danish columnists to Franco Zeffirelli - contrast this with their own governments' supine stance. What he must now do is to build on the new situation with steps that logically follow, rather than undermine, the airstrikes. Regaining the diplomatic initiative will be hard. But it would be his making as Foreign Secretary.

## FARE'S FARE

### Passengers deserve a better menu

Crossing the Channel on a ferry, your lungs full of bracing sea air, you begin to feel hungry. You face a stark choice: an unappetising restaurant, or leaving your stomach to rumble until you reach land. Anyone who has been unfortunate enough to suffer this predicament will welcome P&O's decision to enlist the culinary skills of Richard Shepherd, one of London's most successful restaurateurs, to raise the standard of its ships' cuisine. But will he be able to make a difference and tickle passengers' tastebuds?

There is a tradition, seemingly peculiar to Britain, that good food and travel do not mix. Despite the efforts of the cream of Britain's chefs - such as Clement Freud, Prue Leith and Raymond Blanc - travellers are still best advised not to travel by rail or ship until they have eaten. Yet rail or ship until they have eaten. Yet anyone who has been on an Austrian train, or stopped in a cafe on an Italian autostrada, will wonder why British travellers are deprived of the gourmet delights that other European countries

enjoy. Is it an incurable symptom of the British disease that most trains cannot offer passengers freshly made sandwiches and cappuccinos? Why is edible fast food available in most of Britain's high streets, but not on a high-speed InterCity bound for London?

While meals on trains and ships have remained stuck in the gourmet doldrums, food on most airlines has improved dramatically. The treat of being given a choice of menus and wine is no longer a privilege reserved for first-class travellers. Even those squashed into economy class at the back of the plane can often choose what to eat and are piled with drinks. If this can be served from a tiny galley in an aircraft, why should not rail and sea passengers be offered even better meals? A ship or train full of passengers is a captive, hungry market, easily tempted by delicious snacks and meals. P&O has realised there is an appetite for good food on the high seas. Proof of its success will, of course, be in the pudding.

## Pension reforms open to abuse

From Mr Patrick Carroll

Sir, There is a strange resemblance between the government proposals for pensions set out in the Green Paper, *Partnership in Pensions* (report, December 16), and the mistakes that initiated pension mis-selling ten years ago.

In 1988 there was a surplus in the national insurance fund that could have been used to improve benefits. Instead, an incentive was made available to encourage take-up of what were then called "appropriate personal pensions". This set in motion the large scale mis-selling of personal pensions that is still uncorrected.

The Prime Minister's "new insurance contract for pensions" will provide incentives to take up what are now called "stakeholder pensions". Once again selling of pensions will be made easier. Unsuspecting people will again be told "the Government is giving money away - sign here".

But this time those carrying more than £9,000 a year will be unable to opt in to the state system because the new second state pension, which will replace Serps, the state earnings related pension, will be a restricted flat-rate scheme.

Besides the more limited choice inherent in the new regime there is also more potential for investment failure. The stock-market equity indices are standing at a high level now. The investment of new stakeholder funds in ordinary shares at present levels could turn out to be quite a disappointment in future years. At least in 1988 the stock market was at a low level, and investment failure has not compounded the troubles of those who were mis-sold pensions (at least not yet).

Though the new state scheme is announced as an insurance contract it will incorporate means-testing for all except the basic state pension, which will continue to lose its value. It is to be hoped the Government will reconsider such a degradation of British social security.

Yours faithfully, PATRICK CARROLL (Director of Research), Pension and Population Research Institute, 35 Canonbury Road, N1 2DG, December 17.

From Mr Jan Manning

Sir, In considering the proposed "stakeholder" pensions the Government should ensure not only that the levels of charges are compulsorily constrained, but also that no pension provider in any way involved in mis-selling in the past is allowed to participate in the new structures.

It is bad enough that those companies and brokers which attempted to profit from mis-selling are still allowed to advertise for and take on new business whilst their old customers' complaints are not satisfactorily dealt with. It would add insult to injury if these same organisations were allowed to benefit from the new structure - having proved themselves unfit under the old.

I write as one who has waited eight years for one of the largest and best known companies to resolve a problem.

Yours sincerely, JAN MANNING, Lakeside Thatch, Mortmead Lane, West Chilington, West Sussex RH20 2PG, December 16.

## White House makeover

From Mr David Suski

Sir, The American Army was not "disgracefully defeated" during the War of 1812, as Mr Mark Corby alleges (letter, December 11). Although it lost the Battle of Bladensburg on August 24, 1814, it won the far more important Battle of Baltimore three weeks later. Indeed, the failed British effort to take Baltimore City and Fort M'Henry gave rise to our national anthem, *The Star Spangled Banner*.

Perhaps a better example of a "disgraceful defeat" would be the Battle of New Orleans (January 8, 1815), where it was the British Army, not the American, that was soundly defeated.

In the end, although "General Ross and his gallant lads" succeeded in their attack on an undefended Washington, neither they nor their torches could besmirch the White House. Indeed, only the President himself can do that, as we are seeing for the second time in our brief history.

Yours truly, DAVID SUSKI, 1401 N. Taft Street, Arlington, Virginia 22201, dss@aoi.com, December 11.

From Mr Adrian Room

Sir, Contrary to Mr Corby's statement, the White House was already known as such by 1809, before the British invasion of 1814.

The name came from its white-grey sandstone, which contrasted strikingly with the red brick of neighbouring buildings. Its official designation from 1818 to 1902 was the Executive Mansion, but in the latter year President Theodore Roosevelt adopted White House as the building's official name.

Yours faithfully, ADRIAN ROOM, 12 High Street, St Martin's, Stamford, Lincolnshire PE9 2LF.

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

## Animal tests for human welfare

From Mr Robin Beare, FRCS

Sir, Mr Cedric Hayes, JP, is apparently "moved to rage and tears at the cruelties inflicted on laboratory animals" (letter, December 14).

Were he to make objective inquiries, he would learn that the vast majority of these animals, essential to the safe development of each and every modern drug, are scrupulously cared for by their keepers, just as a good husbandman cares for his stock and a skilled craftsman for his tools. (Very unlike some of the long-distance sheep and cattle-hauliers, to whom the welfare of their passengers appears to be of little consequence.)

I am surprised that Mr Hayes - a member, however minor, of the judiciary - should regard Barry Horne, a convicted firebomber, as a "hero".

Yours faithfully, ROBIN BEARE, Scraggs Farm, Cowden, Edenbridge, Kent TN8 7EB, December 16.

From Mr Spike Milligan

Sir, A human being who becomes sick should allow himself or herself to progress with dignity, whether in life or in death. Animals get diseases and die from them; we too should take our chance in the world - that's how life is. To interfere with that process and to use animals for the benefit of man is immoral.

My wife died from cancer, having refused to use any known medicines that had been used in animal experimentation. It wasn't easy for her, but she died with a clear conscience.

Sir, I am writing to you, Sir Spike Milligan, SPT KE MILLIGAN, c/o Spike Milligan Productions, 9 Orr, The Court, Bayswater W2 4RL, December 19.

From Mr L. Good

Sir, In the debate about animal experimentation it is remarkable how often it is assumed that all animal research is medical.

## Birds of prey

From the President of the British Falconers' Club

Sir, Jessica Ruggles (letter, December 15) asks how falconers can persuade their hawks to discriminate between types of bird. Hawks are flown off the first at licensed quarry, which includes game birds, rabbits and hare. The hawk is held in place by the jesses attached to its ankles and is only released when the quarry is verified. To make doubly certain, pointing or flushing dogs are used and are trained to scent out only legitimate quarry. In the case of ground game, ferrets perform the same role.

Falcons and hawks quickly become wedded to specific quarry and subsequently take no notice of protected species - awaiting sight of those they are permitted to chase. If a flight is unsuccessful and the hawk takes stand in a tree it is recalled to the glove for reward before proceeding further.

There are only 3,000 falconers in the UK flying hawks at legitimate and traditional quarry; the nation's 60,000 wild sparrowhawks are just as natural in their actions, if less discriminating.

Yours faithfully, R. A. WILSON, President, British Falconers' Club, The Haven, Ryan Minor, Helston, Cornwall TR12 7JL.

From the Chairman of The Hawk Board

Sir, The National Trust decided to reinstate falconry on its land (report,

The latest available Home Office figures (1997) suggest that some 2.6 million experiments are performed on animals annually. At least one third of these were non-medical, and many involved the testing of commercial products for the assessment of maximum damage potential and the recording of data. Few of these products are essential for anyone's survival.

Given the purpose of the trials, the suffering induced in the animals used (which range from primates, horses, dogs and cats through to guinea pigs, birds and fish) can be so prolonged and so catastrophic that it is impossible to justify them in a civilised society.

If we had the courage and the integrity to take a lead on this issue, perhaps other countries would eventually follow.

Yours faithfully, L. GOOD, 21 North End, Meldreth, Royston, Hertfordshire SG8 6NR, December 17.

From Mr Roger Shorter

Sir, Perhaps John Lloyd (letter, December 11), who claims that the abuse of animals is "an area in which the Church should have shown more interest", is unaware that this was one of the subjects addressed by the Archbishop of Canterbury in the first of his Lenten addresses, delivered in Canterbury Cathedral on February 26 this year.

In it, Dr Carey referred to the need to think of "issues like cruelty to... battery chickens, vivisection and many other abuses". He concluded by saying "it is clear that we still have a long way to go".

Meanwhile, many Church-based animal welfare groups exist - Anglican, Catholic, evangelical, Quaker, and a Methodist one about to be formed.

Yours, ROGER SHORTER, 32 Balderton Buildings, Brown Hart Gardens, W1Y 1TT, December 11.

## Fleet Street as a refuge for patriots

From Mr Michael Cudlipp

Sir, Anthony Howard relates ("Tell me on a Sunday, Agent X", December 17) that he was shocked to discover a journalist colleague routinely reported to MI6 during the Cold War. I never knew of a correspondent being paid by the security services, but it was common practice when I worked in Fleet Street (*The Sunday Times* and *The Times*, 1958-73) for correspondents returning on leave to be extensively debriefed by the Colonial Office and the Foreign Office (and therefore doubtless by the security services).

Patriotism was probably the journalists' prime motivation, not to mention the opportunity to pick up covert information, but it was not healthy. One cannot help feeling that some correspondents were flattered and indeed excited by the attention. Also, that some were used to plant disinformation.

This use of journalists extended to home areas. Certainly, some political and defence journalists were given exclusive kites to fly and rewarded for good behaviour by their government sources with occasional tasty leaks. Payment to journalists, at least in kind, was common among motoring, travel, air, business and property correspondents. Cars on loan, free holidays, cases of Scotch, share tips.

No doubt everything is different nowadays. Perhaps, also, there are fewer lazy journalists. Lazy journalists love being fed with information from "irrefutable" sources that they don't need to check on. They also like honours for services to patriotism.

Yours sincerely, MICHAEL CUDLIPP (Deputy Editor, *The Times*, 1967-73), 25 Ballygate, Beccles, Suffolk NR34 9ND, December 19.

## Britain's health

From Dr Michael Baxendale

Sir, How outrageous of Alastair Macle to suggest that the food industry is responsible for making "40 per cent of us disease-prone through obesity" (letter, December 9). Do we force-feed our consumers? The consensus is clear that the main cause of obesity in Britain today is lack of physical activity.

The food and drink manufacturing industry employs 500,000 people who are dedicated to providing tasty, nutritious, safe foods at affordable prices.

Not only does it voluntarily provide nutrition information on packets and labels, but it also funds a healthy lifestyle campaign, "Join the activators", which promotes a balanced diet combined with active leisure.

Yours faithfully, MICHAEL BAXENDINE (Chairman, Communications Committee), Food and Drink Federation, 6 Catherine Street, WC2B 5JJ, December 9.

## Branching out

From Mr L. B. van der Watt

Sir, Your report on Christmas trees (December 14) is right about the attractive qualities of the Noble Fir, but it is wide of the mark in stating that it is "virtually impossible to grow in most parts of Britain... where it is quickly killed off by frost". There are many beautiful stands of mature Noble Firs in Western and Central Scotland, including areas such as my own where frosts of -15C are sometimes experienced.

Noble Firs do require acidic soil and they will not grow in dry chalky soil. They grow quickly in the right conditions; I have some, planted as 12in seedlings, that have reached 20ft in eight years, and they can tolerate strong winds. One word of caution: they may grow as tall as 50 metres, and are not for small suburban gardens.

Yours faithfully, L. B. VAN DER WATT, Halyon House, Kipp Road, Strathroy, Callander, Perthshire FK18 8NQ, December 15.

## A giant step?

From Mr Jonathan Stiles

Sir, They can send a man to the Moon. How come they can't make a decent set of Christmas tree lights?

Yours, JONATHAN STILES, Field Place, Dunsfold, Godalming, Surrey GU8 4LR, December 19.

## Circular greetings

From Mrs Gareth Morris

Sir, If there is anyone who has not holidayed in the West Indies, Val d'Aire, Lou or Kenya, whose children have achieved nothing, and who would like to send me a Christmas circular letter, I'd be awfully relieved to have it.

Yours faithfully, PATRICIA MORRIS, 4 West Mall, Clifton, Bristol BS8 4BH, patricia.morris@btinternet.com, December 20.

Letters to the Editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number - 0171-782 5046. e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk



OBITUARIES

ANTONIO ORDOÑEZ

Antonio Ordoñez, bullfighter, died of cancer on December 19 in Madrid aged 66. He was born on February 16, 1932.

Within the bullfight, the career of Antonio Ordoñez was shaped by his great rivalry with his celebrated brother-in-law, Luis Miguel González Lucas (better known by his ring name "Dominguín"). Both in their fighting style and their personal lives, the two men were antithetical to each other.

The personal life of Dominguín was as demonstrative as his ring style, and his dark good looks and lean body attracted the attentions of numerous screen actresses.

Ordoñez's life produced no such perilous jousts in the lists of love. His most famous single act in that sphere was to marry Dominguín's sister Carmen, thus writing two famous bullfighting dynasties.

To Spanish aficionados of the sport (or art as they consider it) Ordoñez was simply incomparable — the matador of his epoch.

The rivalry between Ordoñez and Dominguín fascinated Ernest Hemingway, to whose notions of "grace under pressure" the persona and style of the former greatly appealed.



Ernest Hemingway talking to Antonio Ordoñez at a bullfight in the late 1950s

greatly exaggerated the bitterness that subsisted between them for the benefit of Hemingway's copy. Hemingway's reports, collected and edited down, were published posthumously as a book entitled *The Dangerous Summer*, in 1985.

Antonio Jiménez Ordoñez was born in Ronda, in southern Spain, where the rules of bullfighting were first codified in the early 18th century.

He made his debut in the bullfighting in 1948 and in that season took part in 76 corridas as a novice.

brother-in-law raised the drama of the bullfight, as well as the level of bullfighting skills, to an unprecedented pitch. Hemingway was not the only foreigner to be enthralled.

Ordoñez sustained many serious injuries in the ring, none perhaps more life-threatening than one at Salamanca in 1962.

Ordoñez also had his brushes with death outside the bullring. In 1967 one of the passengers in a car he was driving was killed and three others seriously injured when the vehicle went off the road into a ravine.

Ordoñez also had his brushes with death outside the bullring. In 1967 one of the passengers in a car he was driving was killed and three others seriously injured when the vehicle went off the road into a ravine.

Ordoñez was subsequently charged with causing death by dangerous driving, but was acquitted at his trial.

Ordoñez died of a cardiac arrest aged 69 in 1996. Ordoñez's wife Carmen, whom he married in 1953, predeceased him and he married in 1985 Pilar Lezcano. She and the two daughters of his first marriage survive him.

DAME UNITY LISTER

Dame Unity Lister, DBE, former chairman of the National Union of Conservative and Unionist Associations, died on December 15 aged 85. She was born on June 19, 1913.



Unity Lister: committed Conservative and Europhile

UNITY LISTER enjoyed her finest hour in 1971 when she chaired the annual Conservative Party conference in Brighton. It was something of a double triumph for her.

The European Movement, the European Union of Women and the Conservative Group for Europe were among the organisations in which she had already played a prominent role.

But Unity Lister, created a Dame in 1972, was never to make it across the Thames from County Hall to the Palace of Westminster.

Born Unity Viola Webley in Woolwich, southeast London, she was the daughter of a general practitioner who had first moved there as an army doctor and then bought a local practice after the First World War.

Unity Lister's gift for languages earned her a job as a military censor during the war, after which she made her entry into local government.

Her spare time, could get by in Dutch and was still attending language classes at the time of her death.

her spare time, could get by in Dutch and was still attending language classes at the time of her death.

In 1940 she married Samuel Lister, whom she had first met when she was 13. After Cambridge and some early experience with Harland & Wolff, Lister had entered the family firm, making industrial machinery in Woolwich.

Unity Lister's gift for languages earned her a job as a military censor during the war, after which she made her entry into local government.

Throughout, she supported and encouraged her public interests, which were to include the chairmanship of the Horniman Museums and a succession of governorships, including those of the Royal Marsden Hospital and various colleges and schools.

He was just as enthusiastic as she was about the Common Market, not least because of the potential benefit he saw in it for his own business.

frustrated academic with a passion for palaeontology and a shared love of travel, the theatre and concert-going.

He even played the flute while she accompanied him on the piano — with the cat as their only audience. But it was politics and the European dimension which continued to absorb Unity Lister.

Outgoing and self-confident, she could seem intimidating — briskly dismissing an ill-judged remark or intervention. But she believed in what she was doing and was not above knocking on doors at election time deliberately making herself conspicuous in a mauve Morris Minor.

He was just as enthusiastic as she was about the Common Market, not least because of the potential benefit he saw in it for his own business.

Her husband Sam died three years ago and Unity Lister, who died suddenly at home, is survived by two nephews and a niece.

PERSONAL COLUMN

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

MUSICIANS Piano, Sax, Bass, etc. 0171 633 4425

DOMESTIC & DIRECTORY

MARRIAGE - divorce, civil partnerships, etc. 0171 782 7930

FLIGHTS DIRECTORY

FLIGHTS DIRECTORY - 0171 663 4425

HIGHSEENERS

HIGHSEENERS - 0171 663 4425

FLIGHTS DIRECTORY

FLIGHTS DIRECTORY - 0171 360 1111

JETLINE

JETLINE - 0171 360 1111

FLIGHTS DIRECTORY

FLIGHTS DIRECTORY - 0171 663 4425

HIGHSEENERS

HIGHSEENERS - 0171 663 4425

FARESAVERS

FARESAVERS - 01476 592095

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COLONEL ANDRE DEWAVRIN

Colonel André Dewavrin, DSO, MC, who under the pseudonym Colonel Passy headed General de Gaulle's wartime secret services in London, died on December 20 aged 87. He was born on June 9, 1911.

ONE of the first of his compatriots to answer the rallying cry of General de Gaulle after the fall of France in 1940, André Dewavrin found himself entrusted with the task of building up Free French intelligence operations and running them from London.

André Lucien Charles Daniel Dewavrin was born in Paris, the son of a businessman. He was educated at the Collège Stanislas and the Lycée Louis-le-Grand, and after studies at the Ecole Polytechnique decided to become a professional soldier.

engineer in the Norway campaign of April-June 1940, after which he was brought to England. He was one of the very few French regular officers who volunteered at once to join de Gaulle and, after a brief and rather glacial interview, was appointed head of the second and third bureaux of the nascent Free French Forces, to handle intelligence and operations.

Like his chief, he had to start from scratch. He soon dropped operations, to concentrate on intelligence and subversion. The British intelligence authorities were happy to co-operate with him; so were the heads of the Special Operations Executive. The existence of SOE's "F" or independent French section, which operated into France on the orders of the British chiefs of staff, was a lasting bone of contention with the Gaullists.

Each of these RF missions was prepared jointly by Dewavrin's office, by SOE, and by the RAF (or, much more rarely, by the Navy).

new to have much useful impact on the national insurrection which broke out in France to accompany the landings in Normandy and on the Riviera: Dewavrin went back to the field for a few weeks, on the "Alois" mission into southern Brittany.

At the end of the war, he was made head of the research branch of the new French Ministry of Defence. As soon as de Gaulle retired, Dewavrin's political enemies devised charges against him of malversation of funds, and put him in prison. Nothing could be proved against him, and he was released; but the incident determined him to turn his back on public life.

He was a Grand Officer of the Legion of Honour, and sat on its council from 1981; was a Companion of the Liberation; held a croix de guerre, the Resistance medal, a DSO and an MC, and Norwegian and Polish decorations as well.

He was twice married and had two sons and a daughter.

THE TIMES CHRISTMAS PERIOD - Publication dates and deadlines for Christmas period notices.

THE TIMES CHRISTMAS PERIOD - Deadlines & opening times for Birth, Marriage & Death Notices.

LANDSLIDE VOTE FOR DE GAULLE - From Our Own Correspondent, Paris, Dec 21. General de Gaulle has been elected President of the Republic by an immense majority.

ON THIS DAY December 22, 1958 - After a period as head of the provisional government of France, General de Gaulle (1850-1970) withdrew from politics in 1953. As first President of the Fifth Republic he led France to economic recovery and Algeria, after a bloody war, to independence.

LANDSLIDE VOTE FOR DE GAULLE - Figures: General de Gaulle 62.33%; M. Chatelet (left wing Mendsieian) 6.72%.

ON THIS DAY December 22, 1958 - Unlike the custom under the Third and Fourth Republics, when the President was chosen by a joint sitting of the two houses of Parliament, the new electoral college, voting for the first time to-day, is more than 81,000 strong.

ON THIS DAY December 22, 1958 - The General's views about Algeria, the greatest of these problems, is the subject of a letter made public to-night, addressed by him to M. De Gaulle, the new Delegate-General of the Government in Algeria.

ON THIS DAY December 22, 1958 - The General's views about Algeria, the greatest of these problems, is the subject of a letter made public to-night, addressed by him to M. De Gaulle, the new Delegate-General of the Government in Algeria.

NEWS

UN weapons inspector under fire
Richard Butler, the sometimes abrasive Australian who heads the United Nations weapons inspectorate...

Branson flies into forbidden territory
Richard Branson flew straight towards the heart of forbidden northern China this morning, defying the country's government...

Lockerbie memorials
Memorial services in Scotland, England and the United States marked the tenth anniversary of the Lockerbie air disaster...

Vicar leaves £5m will
A former vicar who was the son of a baronet but lived on a council estate and drove a battered old van has left more than £5 million in his will...

Octoplets battle on
The world's only surviving octuplets were in critical but stable condition yesterday in a Houston hospital...

Car crash lawsuit
A man who was paralysed when his car skidded on black ice won the right to sue a local authority for up to £3 million in damages...

US manhunt ends
A hunt across North America for a man suspected of shooting dead his British wife and their daughter ended when he shot himself on the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco...

Flighty females rule the roost
Few males in creation get a worse deal than the wattled jacana, a tropical water-bird exploited by its mates...



Peter Mandelson toured the Dome yesterday and announced that the director Hugh Hudson will produce a film for the project

BUSINESS

More cuts: Britain has room for further deep cuts in interest rates and so long as the Bank of England delivers them...

SPORT

Football: Paolo Di Canio's future with Sheffield Wednesday became less certain after his lawyer suggested that the player might not return to England from Italy until the new year...

ARTS

Prison turn: Oxford Castle housed criminals for 1,000 years until its closure in 1996. A hotel conversion is under discussion...

SKIN DEEP

By Christmas Fiona Elliott will have spent £2,000 on cosmetic enhancement. And she is only 34...

Preview: Exploring the British middle class's passionate relationship with the Aga cooker...

People of the century
History has never been made solely by "the captains and the kings". They always strode a crowded stage...

Diplomatic offensive
War may be a martial continuation of diplomacy, but after the airstrikes on Iraq, Britain needs to put its diplomacy on a war footing...

Fare's fare
There is a tradition, seemingly peculiar to Britain, that good food and travel do not mix...

LIBBY PURVES
Never have I felt warmer towards Richard Branson. I forgive him the wedding dress. I forgive him the trains: this great man has risen to our hour of need...

ALEX SALMOND
The Foreign Secretary may be spending his Christmas week on the phone, but he will be getting a cloth ear from a good many of his fellow Foreign Ministers...

MICHAEL GOVE
I should like to ask for your forbearance as I refrain from offering arguments for impeachment or bombing and attempt to revive the dying art of the Clerihew...

Antonio Ordóñez, bullfighter; Colonel André Dewavrin, head of the Free French intelligence service; Dame Unity Lister, Conservative Party activist...

Pension reform: tests on animals; journalists and security services; birds of prey; needle exchanges; right of appeal; Britain's health; Christmas greetings...



Image description

TOMORROW

IN THE TIMES
ARTS: The D'Yoy Carte Company takes Gilbert & Sullivan's joyful adventures with pirate, policeman and a modern major-general to the West End... HOMES: Renting: spare a thought for the landlord who leads to students...

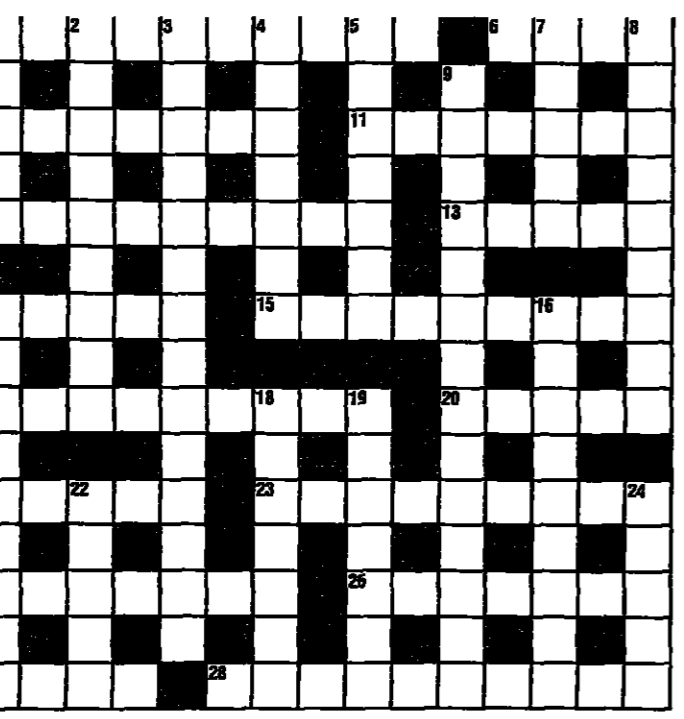
LOVE OR MONEY?

What price should be put on the death or injury of a loved one... Funding boost: Courts are getting a boost in funds as IT is championed as a launch pad for a legal system for the millennium...

Antonio Ordóñez, bullfighter; Colonel André Dewavrin, head of the Free French intelligence service; Dame Unity Lister, Conservative Party activist...

Pension reform: tests on animals; journalists and security services; birds of prey; needle exchanges; right of appeal; Britain's health; Christmas greetings...

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,981



ACROSS
1 City securing ties, say, with unskilful player (10)
6 Secular US city infuriated church leaders (4)
10 Everyone getting to university by means of deposits (7)
11 Skill of team-leader on sledge (7)
12 PM is following the example of almost nobody (9)
13 Unwell, fast losing power (5)
14 Old-fashioned church music's played so sweetly (5)
15 Band of archers to regroup (9)
17 Misdirected lawsuit that has no hope of success (4,5)
20 Tin box of old that was hard to hunt down (5)
21 Vernacular I would use, going to holiday isle (5)
23 Operatic spectacles held up by Handel, we hear (9)
25 Miser including two grand in tax return (7)
26 Drinking toast for so long (7)
27 Common grub found in wheat stalks (4)
28 Highway from Bury, say? (10)
DOWN
1 Destroyed, say, an African lake (5)
2 People who reveal legends of famous archer? (4-5)
3 Upside-down, butterflies make marks on paper (8,6)
4 Puccini, perhaps, joining soldier on a lake in Italy (7)
5 Dangerous element of loveless scenario, possibly (7)
7 Fish found between a couple of rays (5)
8 Did this clipper never touch the bottom? (5,4)
9 Backing group in early European Song Contest (1,4)
14 After all, one goes into social gathering for flirtation (9)
16 Excellent triple pie served up in 4's restaurant (9)
18 French one left port - with blank menu, perhaps, joining soldier on a lake in Italy (7)
22 Valuable bar pub reportedly acquired (5)
24 Take steps to form alliance with running mate? (5)
Times Two Crossword, page 40

Solution to Puzzle No 20,980
HOMSTRICTS AIRY
V Y O H A B U
DECHASE DEADLY
P E R H T E
BSCHEW VOICERS
T M O O D TELEPATHIC
G I E A I C
SKYSCRAPER CHEF
A L A L A P
CHARISMA MADCAP
O M O T I E N O
TITIAN EL DORADO
S H I A I T B E
STAG CHURCHYARD

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new and used car reports from the AA menu of 195 cars
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HOURS OF DARKNESS

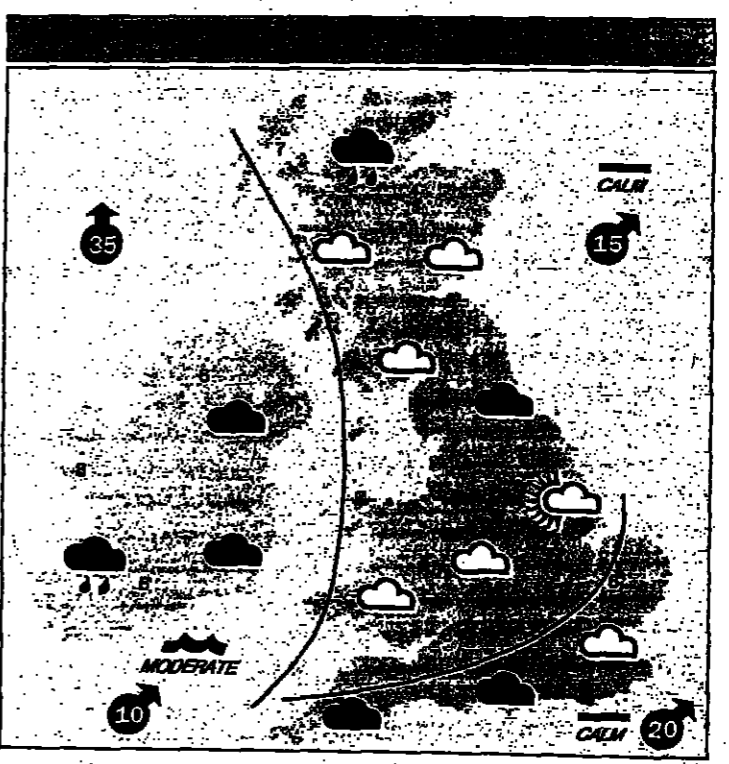
Sun sets: 8.04 pm
Sun rises: 3.54 pm
Moon sets: 7.46 pm
Moon rises: 10.17 am

AROUND BRITAIN (YESTERDAY)

24 hrs to 5 pm. c=cloud, d=drizzle, de=dust storm, du=dust, f=fog, g=gales, h=halt, r=rain, sh=shower, s=sleet, s-sun, l=thunder
Abertawe 0.01 1 34 an Jersey 4.9 2 45 s
Anglesey 1.1 0.10 8 46 r Kintyre 0.1 0.02 3 37 an
Ardara 1.1 0.10 8 46 r Lundy 0.1 0.02 3 37 an

AROUND

Table with columns for location, sun, rain, cloud, etc. for various regions.



Changes to the chart below from notes: high C will drift east and build slightly; low L will be absorbed by low M which will deepen slightly and drift towards Iceland



Table with columns for location, AM, HT, PM, HT, TODAY, AM, HT, PM, HT.

Yesterday: highest day temp. Colchester and Penzance, both Cornwall, 10C (50F), lowest day max: Epsom, 0.2C (32.4F), highest sun: Jersey 4.3hrs.

INSIDE SECTION

2

TODAY

ECONOMICS

Anatole Kaletsky confesses the error of his ways

PAGE 25

ARTS

A perfect Renaissance Nativity scene

PAGES 28, 29

LAW

How much do we owe Josie and her father?

PAGES 30, 31

TELEVISION AND RADIO Pages 38, 39

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

TUESDAY DECEMBER 22 1998

# IMF says UK must cut base rates further

By JANET BUSH, ECONOMICS EDITOR

BRITAIN has room for further deep cuts in interest rates and so long as they are delivered the country should be in economic recovery in the second half of next year, the International Monetary Fund said yesterday.

The call for further rate cuts from the Bank of England came as the IMF published its latest world economic outlook in which growth is forecast to drop to 0.9 per cent in 1999, which, in line with the Treasury's predictions, will mean that Britain escapes recession.

The news helped to spur a big jump in the stock market in London where the FTSE 100 of leading shares surged to close 134.6 points higher at 5,876.5. The rise had traders eyeing a spectacular recovery in the blue chip index after a nervous autumn, with the FTSE possibly rising through 6,000 by the end of the year.

Much of yesterday's rise was down to a resurgent Wall Street, where investors were cheering the end of air strikes against Iraq and ignoring Saturday's vote to begin impeachment proceedings against President Clinton. With the addition of the so-called "Santa Claus" effect of markets rising at the end of the trading year, the Dow Jones industrial average was nearly 150 points higher in early afternoon trading at 9,050.

In its report, the IMF praised the Bank's Monetary Policy Committee for its recent reversal in the direction of interest rate policy. It added, however, that even after total cuts of 1.25 percentage points, monetary policy was still relatively tight and that "there is significant scope for rates to be

cut further as growth weakens and inflation concerns recede".

In a separate report of its annual assessment of Britain published today, the IMF said that "private sector fundamentals are strong; and past policies have ensured that monetary policy is well placed to respond appropriately, and fiscal policy to utilise fully the automatic stabilisers".

The IMF concludes that "it is likely, therefore, that the slowdown will be short-lived".

The IMF forecast that American growth would drop to 1.8 per cent in 1999 from 3.6 per cent this year but said that this slowdown was needed to restore the economy to a more sustainable path and should not be counteracted by further cuts in US interest rates.

In Britain, the IMF forecast that underlying inflation will remain on target at 2.5 per

cent in 1999 but that unemployment will rise to a rate of 5.1 per cent next year from 4.7 per cent in 1998.

Final figures for third-quarter gross domestic product showed that Britain ran the biggest balance of payments surplus for 17 years. The current account was in the black to the tune of £2.3 billion. However, City economists said that the figures were freakish, largely reflecting huge losses made by foreign banks in the City from the implosion of Russia and the near-collapse of Long Term Capital Management.

Balance of payments figures count profits made by foreign banks as cash exported from the country. Losses are counted as income. Underlying figures show that Britain's trade performance is deteriorating. Trade in goods showed a deficit of £5.2 billion, the highest since early 1990.

The results of the IMF's annual assessment of the UK was glowing. It welcomed Bank of England independence and said that the way that it had responded to its job had been "impressive"; it praised fiscal policy, saying that "the degree of fiscal consolidation achieved by the Government since coming to office can only be viewed as highly commendable".

It recommended that the Government switch to the European measure of consumer prices, on which basis British inflation is near the European average. It said that targeting the RPIX measure of underlying inflation "appears to needlessly self short the extent of the UK's inflation convergence" with Europe.

IMF on slump risks, page 25



Douglas Hall, left, and Freddy Shepherd arrive at the Newcastle United annual meeting where they were met by angry fans

## Newcastle pair torn off a strip by angry investors

By JASON NISSÉ

DOUGLAS HALL and Freddy Shepherd, the controversial directors of Newcastle United who resigned earlier this year after insulting fans, players and local women, ran the gauntlet of angry fans at the club's delayed annual meeting yesterday.

Shareholders, some of whom have lost thousands of pounds in the 22 months that Newcastle has been a public company, accused the board of "selling the club down the river" for backing a £160 million bid from NTL, the US cable company. The bid values Newcastle at 17 per cent less than the 135p a share float price.

However, the real anger was saved for Mr Hall and Mr Shepherd, who offered themselves for election to the board, a result that was a foregone conclusion as they control 64 per cent of the club's shares. An overwhelming majority of

those who attended the meeting voted against their return but when a poll was taken the two received the support of shareholders speaking for 70.6 per cent of Newcastle's shares with just 3.7 per cent opposing them. The meeting, at Newcastle Civic Hall, had been delayed two weeks because of a row about the return of Mr Hall and Mr Shepherd which led to the resignation of the group's chairman, Denis Cassidy. At times the AGM threatened to collapse into farce with shareholder after shareholder attacking the board. "I find it sad that the present management has created such ill will from the city and the supporters," said Alan Clark, a shareholder, while another, Ted Ablett, of Durham, said: "The die has been cast and we are effectively only here as part of a paper exercise."

### BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100	5876.5 (+134.6)
Nikkei	14152.96 (-41.34)
Dow Jones	9060.94 (+157.31)
S&P Composite	1206.54 (+18.51)

US RATE

Federal Funds	4.75% (4.75%)
Long bond	102.00% (103.00%)
Yield	5.07% (5.01%)

LONDON MONEY

3-month interbank	6.75% (6.75%)
Life long gilt	118.26 (118.52)

STERLING

New York	1.6812* (1.6822)
London	1.6810 (1.6817)
DM	2.2126 (2.2187)
FF	9.4338 (9.3849)
SFr	2.2852 (2.2834)
Yen	195.14 (194.50)
C Index	101.2 (100.7)

DOLLAR

DM	1.6740* (1.6820)
FF	5.5910* (5.5775)
SFr	1.3825* (1.3470)
Yen	116.18* (116.10)
S Index	105.0 (104.6)

Tokyo close Yen 114.90

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 15-day (Mar)	\$10.10 (\$10.20)
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GOLD

London close	\$288.95 (\$290.4)
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\* denotes midday trading prices

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Volvo soars on bid rumours

SHARES in Volvo, the Swedish motor manufacturer, raced ahead yesterday as speculation that Ford, the US giant, is seeking an alliance or may even bid for the company. Volvo shares soared 7.6 per cent, before slipping to close 26 per cent higher at 178.6 crowns (£12.75) on the Stockholm market. The company refused to confirm or deny the speculation. A spokesman said: "We hold talks with everyone. This does not necessarily involve a sale." Ford UK deal, page 23

## BRC doubt on official figures

By JANET BUSH

THE accuracy of the official figures that said sales on the high street bounced in November were called into question yesterday by the British Retail Consortium, the body representing nine in ten UK retailers.

The BRC, which has repeatedly highlighted the plight of retailers in the run-up to what has been dubbed "Black Christmas", said that figures from the Office for National Statistics showing a 0.8 per cent rise in sales volumes last month may be inaccurate and could end up being revised down. The BRC estimated that sales had fallen 0.4 per cent in November.

A BRC spokesman said: "We're not denigrating the ONS figures in any way, but there's a history of the [retail sales] figures having to be revised and rebalanced." In a day of statistical tit-for-tat, the ONS, responsible for official sales figures, swiftly re-

torted that it had absolute confidence in its members and received strong support from analysts in the City.

Richard Jeffrey, chief economist at The Chamberhouse Group, said: "The official figures have proved very reliable over the years. They have far more street credibility than the BRC figures."

The ONS said that three month comparisons give a better idea of underlying trends in a series which is, frankly, volatile. Its figures show that the value of sales in the three months to November was up 3.0 per cent on the same period a year ago, not widely out of line with the BRC's own figure of 2.8 per cent.

The ONS also noted that its figures are based on a sample of 5,000 firms, covering the range of the sector, including mail order, while the BRC's statistics are drawn from a survey of the 75 largest retailers.

## Moses film fails to command

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

THE *Prince of Egypt*, the film that was supposed to position Steven Spielberg's DreamWorks studio as a Hollywood rival to Walt Disney has seen a disappointing response to its opening in the US.

The animated epic based on the biblical story of Moses was overtaken at the box office in its opening weekend by a movie called *You've Got Mail* about e-mailing. The long-awaited *Prince of Egypt* took \$14 million (£8 million), \$4 million less than the film about internet lovers Tom Hanks and Meg Ryan.

The weekend before Christmas is the key launch date for Hollywood when films jostle for sales ahead of the Oscars. Wall Street has seen *The Prince of Egypt* launch as the make-or-buy point for DreamWorks, which Spielberg set up four years ago.

## GEC cancels Christmas leave

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

GEC's race to strike a merger deal with British Aerospace quickened yesterday as all Christmas holiday for directors and key advisers was cancelled. With GEC executives locked in meetings yesterday in a bid to thrash out the best way forward, shares in both companies pepped up with BAE adding 20 1/2p to 530p and GEC gaining 28p to 556 1/2p.

The imminence of an announcement, which will change the tack of BAE's plans for a merger with the US-German giant DaimlerChrysler, was heightened when GEC's brokers and key advisers were told to cancel any breaks over the holiday period.

Talks between GEC and officials at the Ministry of Defence were ongoing last night. It is thought that the Department of Trade and Industry will also be involved in any move that will mark a substantial

reshaping of both the British and European aerospace and defence industry.

GEC directors are thought to be aiming to finalise their decision in a meeting in the next two days, although an announcement may not be made until the new year. Observers believe it may still be possible that GEC could yet try to link with a US company. However, while GEC has talked to a number of companies in recent months, that move is thought unlikely.

A link with BAE could be a full-scale £23 billion merger or an absorption by BAE of GEC Marconi. The move is crucial to which way BAE goes with its planned tie up with DASA - Daimler-Chrysler Aerospace. The UK Government, which is keen to encourage European consolidation, is thought to favour links that involve all three parties.

## Floating will lift Air France staff

By CARL MORTSHED, INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS EDITOR



Spinetta: staff will benefit

AIR FRANCE pilots and staff could end up controlling almost a quarter of the shares in the £2 billion airline when it is floated on the French stock market early next year.

The airline, led by Jean-Cyril Spinetta, has confirmed that the French Government plans a Fr3.5 billion to Fr4 billion (about £400 million) offer of shares to the public early next year. Previously the Government indicated that the offering would amount to up to a fifth of

the equity. However, a pay deal with striking airline pilots last summer, other shares owned by staff and bank loans convertible into equity mean that the Government's stake will be diluted to 52 to 53 per cent.

Air France staff will be the main beneficiaries of the flotation. According to a spokesman, with existing shareholders staff could hold up to 23.5 per cent of the airline. The summer strike, which threatened chaos at the start of the World

Cup and cost the company Fr1.3 billion, led to a wages-for-shares swap. Pilots were offered shares in exchange for agreement to forgo an equivalent sum in salary. Depending on the level of participation, pilots alone could end up with 12 per cent of Air France.

Controversy has dogged Air France's preparations to float, with rival airlines attempting to block a Fr20 billion government bail-out of the airline. British Airways and other Euro-

pean airlines secured a court ruling that the state aid was illegal but the European Commission said that it complied with European law because it formed part of a restructuring and cost-cutting programme.

Analysts speculated that Air France's share offering would need to be cheap to get off the ground. Richard Hannah, of BT Alex Brown, said: "The airline industry is having a rough time. It is not an easy time to float an airline."

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movement drives us

# EMU will bear fruit for shoppers

NEIL SELBY is one of J Sainsbury's army of 120 buyers, whose job it is to get goods from supplier to customer with the minimum of fuss and the maximum of customer satisfaction, and, of course, the maximum of profit.

Like all of the supermarket's buyers, Mr Selby, who is responsible for keeping Sainsbury's shelves stocked with long-life fruit juice, had just been to one of a series of briefings run by its treasury department on how the euro could affect his job.

He came away from the briefing reassured that the introduction of the euro will make his job easier for the simple reason that he will have to deal with fewer currencies.

"We are ready to do deals in euros, and I haven't got any qualms about it. It's just another currency. What I'd like is to have one in my hand, that is when it will hit."

One of the points of the treasury briefings, he said, was to make sure that any worries the buyers had were properly addressed and to make sure that all the people involved

In the final run up to economic and monetary union, The Times looks at how businesses are adjusting to this change to our trading environment. In a series ranging from car dealers to lawyers, we find how changes, what problems, and opportunities have emerged and how they have dealt with them. Today, Neil Selby, a buyer at Sainsbury's, explains about "The euro and me."

## The Euro and me

were "speaking the same language."

Mr Selby thinks that Sainsbury's, like the other supermarket groups, should see some financial benefit from the introduction of the euro, because transaction costs will fall and because it will be easier for buyers to compare prices across Europe.

in lower prices for consumers. Mr Selby expects that the company's customers will also spend some time making price comparisons when they travel across Europe.

"As buyers, we will have the opportunity to look at costs across national boundaries, so we should be able to get better prices. The euro is being sold on the idea that the pressures are going to be downwards," he said.

"Now, if it is a very big deal and I have the time, I can take out all the currency and transport costs and so on. The euro will make this very much easier," he added. "It will give us a chance to probe a little deeper into costs."

Like many others, Mr Selby recognises that it is all theoretical at this stage, particularly as the UK is remaining *sopra partes*. "The debates are all rather divorced and there are so many uncertainties, such as will the euro be strong against the pound? How will it affect unemployment. It's a suck it and see thing."

The retail side of the business has also had to get involved because the group has some stores in France, which will have to switch over from the punt when euro notes and coins are introduced.



Neil Selby is enthusiastic, believing the euro will result in lower prices for consumers

Mr Selby may be relaxed about the effect the euro will have on his job, but he is enthusiastic about it from a personal point of view. He has to travel quite a lot for his work, and cannot wait to use the euro when he is in one of the 11 countries adopting it. "When I can pay in euros it will be great fun."

Best of all, if and when the UK does join up, he is looking forward to getting his first euro-denominated payslip.

SARAH CUNNINGHAM

## Pep and unit trust sales leap by a third

SALES of unit trusts and personal equity plans leapt by nearly a third to £845.7 million last month as private investors renewed their faith in the stock market. Net retail sales jumped 68 per cent to £385.5 million in November, two months after the late summer crash. After a dip in October, sales growth bounced back £25.8 million to £385.7 million. Sales growth was strongest in unit trusts outside the PEP wrapper, however, as independent financial advisers and company sales forces encouraged investors hit by falling interest rates to take shelter in equity income and corporate bond funds.

Investment advisers were more cautious, increasing their commitment by £13.7 million to £262.2 million. Buoyed by the recovery in the market, funds under management by unit trust companies rose 5 per cent to £178 billion, although this is still below the level recorded in March. Philip Warland, director-general of Aitif, said: "Investors in November maintained confidence in the investment fund market. With interest rates in the UK and further afield on a downward path, surplus cash looking for income has taken advantage of the wealth of opportunities in both bond and balanced funds."

## Warning hits Gremlin

SHARES in Gremlin, the computer games company behind titles such as *Motorhead* and *Men in Black*, dived 27 per cent to 91p yesterday, after it issued a profits warning blamed on "an increasingly competitive market and a difficult retail environment". The company said that sales would be substantially ahead of the same period last year, but significantly below expectations. It also complained of increased marketing and product development costs. Gremlin said the exact outcome of trading performance in the first half would depend upon sales over the next six weeks.

## Compass buys stake

COMPASS GROUP, the contract catering company, has paid \$78 million (£47 million) for a 50 per cent stake in GR, the largest foodservices business in Brazil, previously wholly owned by Accor of France. Accor owns 4.6 per cent of Compass shares and the two companies already work closely together in a number of countries, including Brazil. Brazil is the fifth-largest institutional catering market in the world, with a total of 8.5 million meals served daily, representing estimated annual sales of \$8 billion, a fifth of which is outsourced.

## De La Rue agrees sale

DE LA RUE, the printing and smart cards group, has agreed to sell its loss-making swipe card terminals business to Ingenico, which is based in Paris, for £9.5 million, payable in Ingenico shares. De La Rue will receive a 4.1 per cent of Ingenico, which it intends to retain in the medium term. The terminals business had net assets of £3.0 million. It made a loss of £1.8 million on sales of £7.9 million for the six months to September 30. The company will incur a loss on the disposal of about £15 million.

## MWB to buy Star City

MARYLEBONE Warwick Balfour Group, the property developer, has agreed to buy Birmingham's Star City leisure park for up to £80 million, on behalf of its MWB Leisure Fund II. Due for completion in 2000 and located on a 25-acre site at Spaghetti Junction alongside the M6, Star City will be the largest commercial leisure scheme in Europe. The 390,000 sq ft park is currently being developed in a joint venture by Richardson Developments and Tarmac Developments.

## Ambishus shares up

SHARES in Ambishus Pub Company, which floated on AIM in May, frothed almost 20 per cent higher as it reported strong trading in its community-based pubs. The 42-strong group reported operating profits before exceptional gains of £1.37 million from sales of £10 million in the 45 weeks to October. At the pre-tax level, it made a loss of £28,000 after taking into account £745,000 of exceptional gains. The shares jumped 15p to 103½p. Philip Snook, chairman, said: "The kind of trading style we have is as recession-proof as you can get."

## Rugby's Pioneer sale

RUGBY GROUP, the building materials company, yesterday announced the sale of Pioneer Plastics, its US laminates subsidiary, for \$160 million (£96 million), as part of the group restructuring announced at the end of last month. Rugby expects to book a £40 million pre-tax profit on the sale. The US company Panoram, from which a goodwill write back of £5.8 million will be deducted. A further \$15 million may be payable, based on the combined profitability of Pioneer and Panoram.

## Sherwood to shed 300

SHERWOOD, the textiles group based in Nottingham, said it is axing 300 jobs after the decision to close four manufacturing units. The company blamed poor trading conditions in the UK high street as well as the continuing worldwide weakness in the demand for lace. The closures will, with the previous decision to close its household lace operation, cost the company £7.2 million in exceptional charges. The company said it is still in discussions with the management team, who are considering a 48p share bid for the company.

## Tay Homes optimistic

TAY HOMES, the housebuilder, yesterday said purchaser confidence had returned after the uncertainty of September and October. In a trading statement the group said interest rate reductions had returned sales reservations to normal levels for the time of year, adding that "a further decline in interest rates could add impetus to the market when it traditionally regains momentum in January". It also said that it had completed its strategic review, but had decided not to give Sunley, which holds a 10 per cent stake, the board representation that it sought.

## US boost for Virgin Atlantic

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

VIRGIN ATLANTIC has won an important concession in its battle to launch a domestic US airline after the Clinton Administration proposed changes in airline ownership rules that will give greater control to foreign companies in US ventures.

Non-US carriers are currently limited to holding a 25 per cent stake in domestic airlines. Richard Branson, the Virgin chairman who has repeatedly tried to set up shop in America, has declined to operate under these rules.

Under the new rules proposed by Rodney Slater, Transportation Secretary, foreign companies can own up to at least 49 per cent of a domestic carrier. This would bring the US in line with most European countries. Mr Slater did not specify the exact percentage ownership to be allowed and said "the percentage could be higher". But analysts said it was unlikely to be more than 49 per cent.

# Banana war strikes at Italian cheesemakers

BY CARL MORTISHED INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS EDITOR

THE US and Europe are on the brink of a trade war that will threaten Italian makers of ewes' milk cheese in order to protect the rights of banana pickers in Honduras.

The Office of the US Trade Representative yesterday published a list of European products threatened with crippling duties in retaliation against Europe's banana regime. The US Government claims that the EU discriminates against Central American bananas where the US companies, Chiquita Brands and Dole, have large interests. The tit-for-tat sanctions will cost "hundreds of millions of dollars" according to a US spokesman and were described by Sir Leon Brittan, the EU Trade Commissioner, as "unilateralism at its worst". He

said: "This list is arbitrary in what it covers and in its value. It threatens European firms and jobs which have no link with the banana dispute whatsoever."

The list is a bizarre collection of specific products, including castmire sweaters, peonies and paper handbags.

Sir Leon raised the temperature of the transatlantic row further by threatening to accelerate the procedure leading to a World Trade Organisation Panel against the US measures. He said: "This dispute is no longer about bananas — it is about respect for the multilateral trade system."

The sanctions will come into force on February 1 if neither side backs down. However, Charlene Barshefsky, the US Trade Representative, threw Brussels a small olive branch yesterday, saying: "Our door remains open to a negotiated

settlement consistent with the EU's WTO obligations."

The sanctions explicitly exclude products from The Netherlands and Denmark, which, according to the US, had voted against the adoption of the EU banana regime. The list also notably excludes products such as Scotch whisky and French wine, which would have aroused vigorous anti-American sentiment among powerful producer groups.

Ms Barshefsky said the US had spent six years seeking redress against the EU banana regime, which favours products from former colonial dependencies in the Caribbean and Africa. Together with Central American states, the US secured a WTO ruling against the regime in 1997, though Washington insists that the EU's new regime perpetuates the discrimination.

Commentary, page 23

## S&P reveals worries over M&S

BY PAUL DURMAN

STANDARD & POOR'S, the debt-rating agency, believes the outlook for Marks & Spencer has turned negative because the stores group has become less resilient to recession.

Although S&P reaffirmed M&S's AAA rating, it has become concerned about the group's strategy. It said: "Ratings could be downgraded if operating margins show no sign of significant and sustained recovery, and if a clear and consistent strategy does not stem from the strategic review in progress."

M&S was buffeted by a high-profile boardroom power struggle that caused Sir Richard Greenbury, chairman, to surrender the position of chief executive to Peter Salisbury.

S&P said that while the retailer's finances remained extremely strong, the downturn in consumer spending had caused retail operating margins in the UK to fall steeply to 8.8 per cent from 11.9 per cent in the first half of last year.

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The Queen's Counsel can be seen every Tuesday on the Law pages of The Times. For 5 years now I have been engaged in litigation with Messrs Stewart and Francis over their portrayal of me in this so-called "cartoon strip", in which I am held up to ridicule and regularly accused of pomposity, vanity, prolixity, and a condescending attitude towards my clients and instructing solicitors. Can one imagine a more grievous slander upon the unsullied reputation of an esteemed advocate such as myself? I anticipate shortly being the beneficiary of substantial libel damages, and it is therefore with very real sincerity that I wish Messrs Stewart and Francis the greatest of success with their publication, that they may be better able to pay any award in full. What more compelling reason could there be for buying this book? Sir Geoffrey Bentwood QC 4 Lawn Buildings, Temple EC4

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## IMF sees risks of global slump ease

BY JANET BUSH, ECONOMICS EDITOR

THE DANGER of worldwide recession has receded in recent weeks, according to the latest economic report by the International Monetary Fund, which yesterday revised upwards its growth forecasts for this year.

The IMF's latest economic outlook suggests that with growth likely to disappoint in the new year, there is scope to lower interest rates because inflationary pressure is absent. Despite some cautious optimism, the IMF has cut its 1999 world growth forecast to 2.2 per cent from the 2.5 per cent published in October. At the same time, it has revised up its figure for 1998 growth to 2.2 per cent from 2 per cent in October, based on a stronger than expected US performance.

However, Japan remains a big risk to the world economy. The IMF has revised a forecast of 0.5 per cent growth in 1999 to a 0.5 per cent contraction, citing doubts about Japan's initiatives to revive its economy.

## Swiss Re acquires FPK for £200m

BY RICHARD MILES, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

FOX-PITT, KELTON (FPK) the privately owned investment bank, is being acquired by Swiss Re in a deal that City sources said was valued at about £200 million.

Swiss Re, the insurance group, is offering to swap its own shares for the entire FPK share capital, which is held by about just over half of the firm's 200-strong workforce. Anthony Hamilton, chairman of FPK, said the firm had turned away other suitors, but accepted Swiss Re's offer as it represented an ideal fit.

Mr Hamilton said FPK, a specialist in providing advice and research to the financial services industry, would be able to use Swiss Re's AAA credit rating to enter the capital markets as a primary rather than agency force. It was established in 1971, and made £27 million (£16 million) pre-tax profit in the year to April.

## Standard in deal with Pru

STANDARD CHARTERED, the international banking group, yesterday said it is entering into a joint venture with Prudential to distribute the life insurer's products (Richard Miles writes).

## Trafford Centre gives Peel boost

BY ROBERT COLE, CITY CORRESPONDENT

Table showing exchange rates for various currencies including Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Turkey, and USA.

Vertical text on the right edge of the page, partially cut off, including words like 'firm', 'TG', 'esca', and 'to buy', 'ain UK', 'alership'.

# Night before the morning after



COMMENTARY  
by our City Editor

Don't trust year-end trading. Do not trust, especially, trading in the days leading up to the confusing launch of the euro, let alone the millennium in a year's time.

Private investors have been warned not to trust stock market prices in the second half of December because of the combination of pre-euro caution and the sidelining of the market-making reforms by the Stock Exchange.

But it is salutary to remember that the Tokyo market peaked amid much back-slapping and mutual congratulation ahead of the 1990 new year festival, only to sink for most of the succeeding nine years.

Today, optimism in the world number two economy is muted. The Nikkei index has fallen by another seventh this year, after a surge of misplaced hope in January gave way to realisation that depression is hard to shake off.

The International Monetary Fund put recent relief at bank reform and tax handouts in perspective yesterday when it revised down its already cautious forecast for the Japanese economy.

After a bigger than expected drop of 2.8 per cent in 1998, the IMF now expects Japan's output to shrink by a further 0.5 per cent next year, instead of expanding by a similar amount.

The US, UK and continental Europe are in much better shape, thanks to decisive interest rate cuts made in belated response to the Asian slump. The world economy should grow at 2.2 per cent next year, says the IMF, which portends a dull time for advanced economies rather than recession.

The UK is still the country most at risk of sliding into reverse. So if share prices are to progress in the new year, investors will have to shrug off a hailstorm of bad news.

High street figures flatter to deceive

Retailers cannot kick customers they have not got, so yesterday, to vent their fury at the miserable level of spending in their shops, they aimed a nasty blow at the solar plexus of the Office of National Statistics instead.

Having already been floored with a rain of punches from the Treasury Select Committee over its dubious earnings figures, the ONS was an easy target. Its estimate that November's retail sales were 2.5 per cent higher in volume terms than the previous year had brought shrieks of anger from the stores, so far removed from the reality did these figures seem to be.

Ratcheting up the insult, the ONS estimated that, in value terms, the growth was even higher in November, at 3.1 per cent. With the stores being forced to slash their prices to drum up any business, this official indication of widening margins seemed farcical.

The British Retail Consortium waited for the weekend to pass before launching its attack on the figures. Had the longed-for pre-Christmas splurge come on Saturday and Sunday, the chances are that the BRC would have kept its counsel; the fact that it was still in filthy mood on Monday indicates that the bills were not swamped.

But the ONS figures and the BRC experience may not be quite as hard to reconcile as they first appear. The ONS figures are drawn from far beyond the high street: from shopping, including those direct mail advertisements in magazines, are included as are regular street markets. While the West End may not have been packed on Sunday, the craft stalls throughout the country were doing a great trade in handmade ceramics and jewellery at a fraction of the store prices.

This is not to say that the public is on a spending spree. People are spending cautiously and the level of spending is below that of earnings growth. This assertion has to rely in part on the ONS earnings figures, sadly so unreliable that they have not been suspended, but the gap looks clear. Yet what should be causing the

end of the year to flatter their performance figures. Not that they would collude in such dastardly behaviour. Events do not always suit that interest anyway. But it is salutary to remember that the Tokyo market peaked amid much back-slapping and mutual congratulation ahead of the 1990 new year festival, only to sink for most of the succeeding nine years.

Today, optimism in the world number two economy is muted. The Nikkei index has fallen by another seventh this year, after a surge of misplaced hope in January gave way to realisation that depression is hard to shake off.

The International Monetary Fund put recent relief at bank reform and tax handouts in perspective yesterday when it revised down its already cautious forecast for the Japanese economy.

After a bigger than expected drop of 2.8 per cent in 1998, the IMF now expects Japan's output to shrink by a further 0.5 per cent next year, instead of expanding by a similar amount.

The US, UK and continental Europe are in much better shape, thanks to decisive interest

rate cuts made in belated response to the Asian slump. The world economy should grow at 2.2 per cent next year, says the IMF, which portends a dull time for advanced economies rather than recession.

The UK is still the country most at risk of sliding into reverse. So if share prices are to progress in the new year, investors will have to shrug off a hailstorm of bad news.

High street figures flatter to deceive

Retailers cannot kick customers they have not got, so yesterday, to vent their fury at the miserable level of spending in their shops, they aimed a nasty blow at the solar plexus of the Office of National Statistics instead.

Having already been floored with a rain of punches from the Treasury Select Committee over its dubious earnings figures, the ONS was an easy target. Its estimate that November's retail sales were 2.5 per cent higher in volume terms than the previous year had brought shrieks of anger from the stores, so far removed from the reality did these figures seem to be.

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store more concern than the ONS statistics is the drift of sales away from them to a new breed of retailer. The Internet book-store and self-employed potters will have provided many a Christmas present this year even though they do not pay a subscription to the BRC.

Charlene declares chandelier war

Displeasure should be on the alert for a petite, mouse-like but dynamic American lady. If they see her buying up customer sweaters, chandeliers and Teasmades as if there is no tomorrow, we are probably headed for a trade war.

In America, Charlene Barshefsky, the US Trade Representative, has already fallen foul of her own Customs for importing excessive numbers of Chinese-made Beanie Babies, then briefly fashionable toys. The embarrassment was swiftly explained as a misunderstanding. There seems little hope that the long-running EU banana saga will be as easily resolved. Central American ban-

ana producers have a good case against EU preference for Caribbean exotics. But the US has no real standing in the debate and has been reduced to claiming, on behalf of affected US multinationals, that this is a service trade issue.

An absurd retaliatory list of physical imports has been drawn up and threatened with 100 per cent tariffs. It is enough to make even the soberest EU citizen become pellucid. A response targeting, say, Californian fruit and wine would play well in France and cause US growers to ask why they were fighting the chandelier war for banana bars-

None of which will help poor banana farmers on either side.

Making a meal of it

PHOTOBITION's offer for Wace will have come as a surprise to those investors who may have been tempted to sell the stock after the company's recent insistence that it was not in bid discussions.

In Takeover Panel parlance, a shared meal at Wace headquarters and five separate telephone conversations do not apparently amount to being in bid discussions any more than Sir Bob Reid's chats with potential suitors equated a bid approach for Sears.

Investor may find the semantics confusing — and costly.

## Firms accused of 'TTG share fiasco' escape rebuke

By FRASER NELSON

THE seven City firms accused of mishandling Thomson Travel Group's £1.7 billion flotation have all escaped without any rebuke after a six-month Securities and Futures Authority investigation.

The SFA said yesterday that it had decided to take no action against Warburg Dillon Read, Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, TTG's advisers, or the five share shops that dealt with private investors.

The firms stood accused of turning the affair into a fiasco, where applications were filed before the deadline but rejected because they were processed too late.

Warburg Dillon Read, the investment banking arm of the United Bank of Switzerland, was criticised for delivering prospectuses late and appointing too few share shops to handle the offer.

It shared a fee of up to £1 million with three other advisers. The SFA said its investigation "did not reveal any matters which will give rise to disciplinary action" — even though 960 complaints and inquiries were lodged.

It has instead decided to "consider whether guidance to firms on aspects of the flotation of new shares is appropriate".

The Share Shop, which was also under investigation, said: "We had not seen anything like this since privatisation. There was a huge response, but everyone acted with due care and attention."

Thomson shares floated in May at an issue price of 170p and reached a high of 199p. However, the levels of outstanding complaints dropped sharply to 40 after the summer's stock market downturn

when the shares bottomed at 107p. Yesterday, the shares closed up 35p at 148p.

The offer attracted one million responses — five times the number anticipated. The large response was helped by the offer of joining TTG's Founders' Club, whose members enjoy a 10 per cent reduction on holidays.

Barclays Stockbrokers, one of the five share shops in the boat, has already apologised for sending out incorrect information and promised to compensate investors for any losses.

TTG itself offered everyone who registered for the public offer, honorary membership of its Founders' Club.

## CRH pips Austrians to control of Istock

By PAUL DURMAN

CRH, the Irish building materials group, has snatched control of Istock, the UK brick-maker, from under the nose of the Austrian raider that built up a 29.8 per cent stake in it in October.

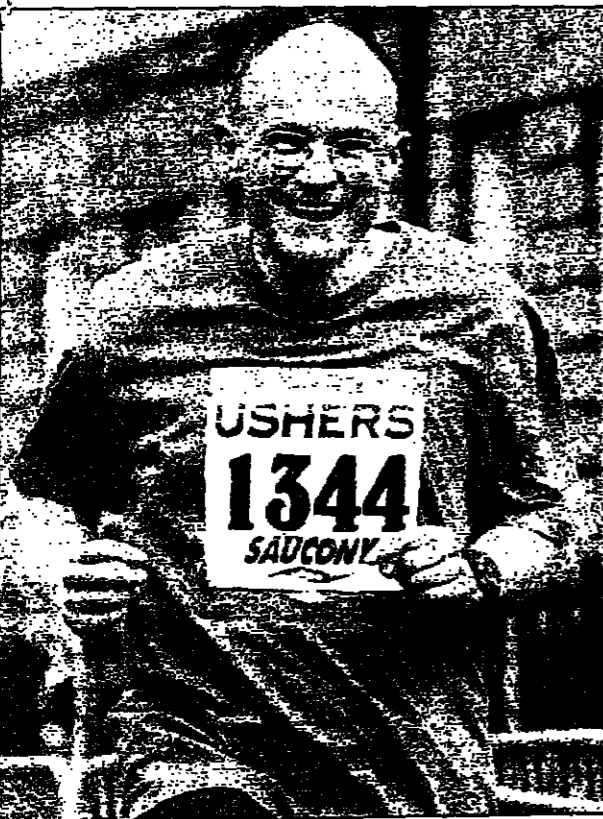
In an audacious move, CRH and its adviser, Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, yesterday acquired a 50.7 per cent stake in Istock from institutions that included M&G, Mercury Asset Management, Fidelity and Threadneedle.

CRH's offer of 70p a share is a 22 per cent premium to Istock's closing price, and values it at £320.4 million. It is highly unusual for institutions to agree to sell at the outset of a possible contested bid. Wienerberger, the Austrian brick giant that built the 29.8 per cent stake in Istock, was not available for comment on how it intended to respond.

Philip Marsan, Istock chief executive, says he was surprised to hear that the Austrian group, the world's largest brick company, had no intention of making a fair offer for the rest of Istock's shares. He said that to have let a competitor have significant influence over Istock "would be destabilising for our employees and value-destroying for our shareholders".

Wienerberger paid top a share for the stake it bought from Briarley Investments. Istock and its advisers believe the Austrians hoped to pick up the rest of the company cheaply at its share price dried.

CRH already distributes some Istock products in the UK and the US. The acquisition will give CRH leading positions in clay bricks in these two markets.



Staying power: Jon Moulton in an Ushers-sponsored road race

## Ushers falls to Alchemy at third go

THE STAYING POWER of Jon Moulton was rewarded yesterday when his venture capital firm, Alchemy Partners, snapped up Ushers of Trowbridge, the Wiltshire brewer, at the third attempt (Dominic Walsh writes).

Four months ago, Ushers announced that talks with four separate parties — including Alchemy — had been called off over price. A second attempt in October, at a recommended price of 117p a share, foundered on the rocks of "turbulent financial markets".

Now, Alchemy — acting through a new buyout vehicle called Rhesus — is to take Ushers private at a reduced price of 112p a share, valuing the group at £107.8 million. The directors and Andrew Green, the company secretary, will share £6.2 million.

Tempus, page 24

## Ford to buy main UK dealership

FORD is to create its first vertically integrated car dealership after agreeing a £28.8 million cash takeover bid for Dagenham Motors, its main UK distributor (Fraser Nelson writes).

Almost two months since it first declared its interest, Ford will buy Dagenham through a joint venture with Jardine Motors — the second-largest Ford UK dealership.

The enlarged company, taking in Jardine's Polar and BPW dealerships, will directly control 7 per cent of all Ford sales in the UK.

David Philip, Dagenham's chairman and managing director, will collect £2.03 million in cash by selling his shares at the agreed price of 160p apiece. Mike Rubbert, service and body-shop director, will get £362,000 from selling his shares. Neither is expected to keep his job.

## Wace faces £40m Photobition bid

By FRASER NELSON

WACE, the printing group, yesterday stumbled into what may be the final chapter of its chequered history as the rival Photobition made a £40 million hostile takeover bid (See Commentary, this page).

Eddie Marchbanks, Photobition chief executive, said he wanted to capture Wace's US operations and to build a pan-American imaging empire based in New York.

The offer comes three days after Wace assured investors that it "is not in discussions with any party that may lead to an offer". The Times had earlier reported that a bidder was preparing a £40 million offer.

Wace yesterday rejected Photobition's bid as "inadequate" and insisted that it had not been approached beforehand.

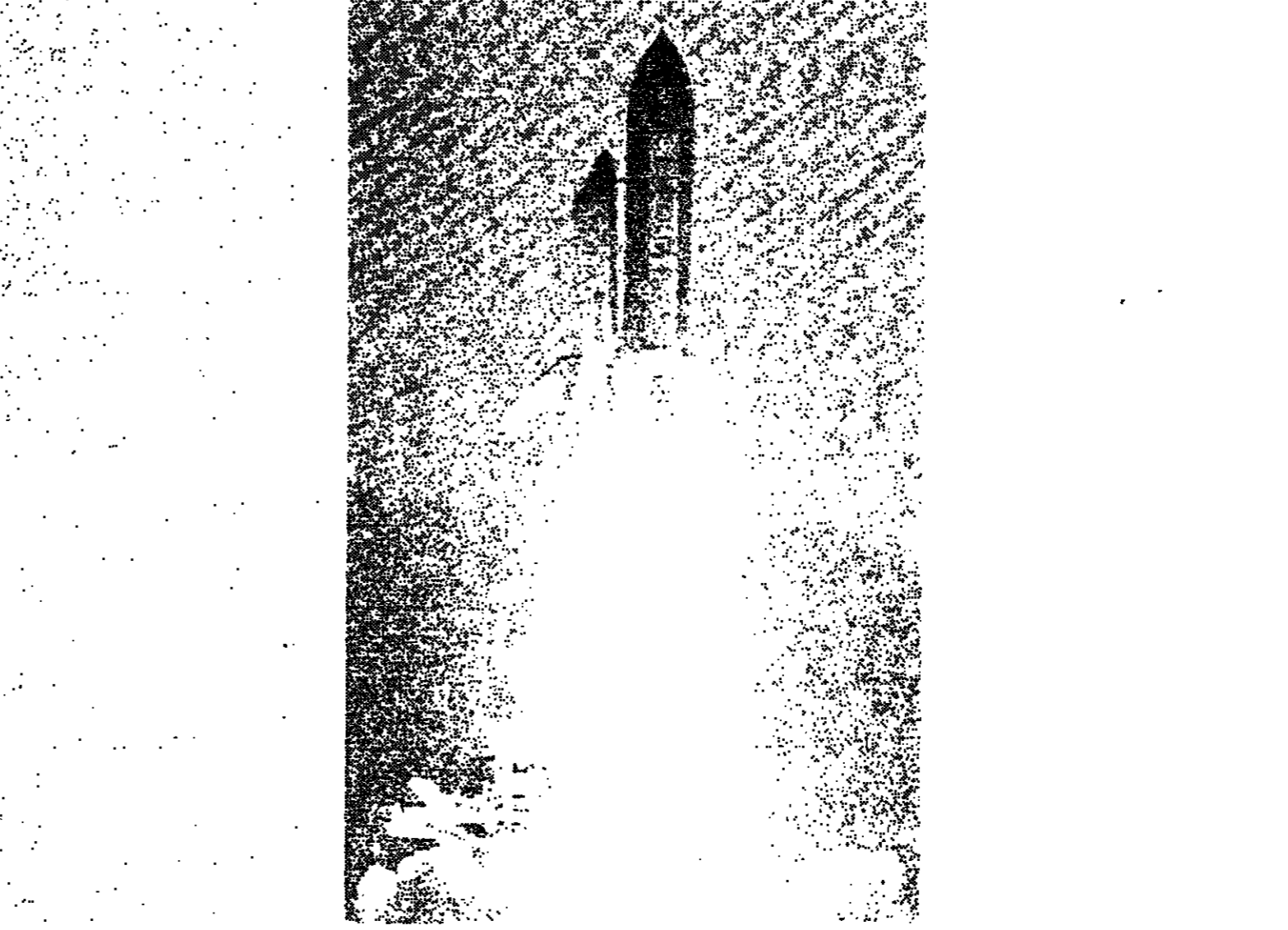
Mr Marchbanks said: "I had lunch with the [Wace] chief executive [Stephen Puckett] three weeks ago. We were all astounded when we saw that statement."

In New York, Photobition trades under its newly acquired Katz brand and Wace trades as Seven. Both prepare adverts for the media, and poster displays for exhibitions.

Wace admitted that Mr Marchbanks made contact on five occasions, but said there was no "approach" as defined by the Takeover Panel.

Wace shares, which have fallen 85 per cent in two years, rose 10p to 51p on Photobition's 50p-a-share bid. A paper alternative values the shares at 52.1p. Photobition will fund the deal by raising £69 million via a rights issue at 228p. Its shares fell 1p to 239p.

Tempus, page 24



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STOCK MARKET



MICHAEL CLARK

Broker takes wraps off its five tips for top in 99

CLIENTS of one of the City's leading securities houses have received an early Christmas present. Credit Suisse First Boston has named its five top tips for 1999 and set a target price for each of them.



Laurence Isaacson, left, Neville Abraham, centre, and Ian Holder, who today resigned from Groupe Chez Gérard

Top of the list is British Aerospace, up 21 1/2p to 531p, which is in merger talks with Daimler Aerospace and GEC. 27 1/2p stronger at 559p. CSFB reckons investors cannot lose, even if the merger falls through, and has set a target price for the shares of 620p.

Dixons, which yesterday celebrated its return as a constituent of the FTSE 100 index, up 37p to 79 1/2p is also seen as a winner, with a target price of 90p. Granada, up 4 1/2p to 10.78, is another tip for the top, with its shares expected to touch 11.20, while Ocean Group, the transport and logistics group, 2 1/2p better at 79p, is also favoured and could reach 85p. Rounding off the five tips is 3i, the venture capitalist, 4p dearer at 559p. CSFB says it is capable of touching the 670p level.

Elsewhere, investors hung on for the ride as share prices on both sides of the Atlantic surged despite the move by Congress to impeach President Clinton. Sentiment is against another cut in US rates when the Federal Reserve Open Market Committee meets later today.

At one stage, the FTSE 100 index climbed 150 points, inspired by a similar move by the Dow Jones industrial average. It ended the session 134.6 higher at 5,876.5 with shortages exaggerating price movements among blue chip stocks. By the close a total of 933 million shares had changed hands. The FTSE 250 index finished 31.7 down at 4,742.9.

British Airways climbed 22 1/2p to 39 1/2p ahead of a series of presentations for brokers and fund managers next month. The rumour mill has been working overtime in the City. Last week Wal-Mart, the US discount retailer, was tipped to bid for Asda after some disappointing interim results. Yesterday, it was being linked with hard-pressed MFI Furniture, up 4 1/2p to 32p. Falling sales have seen the MFI price drop from a peak of 140p this year. Even so, brokers maintain a bid from Wal-Mart seems unlikely. Asda finished 6 1/2p better at

159p after Morgan Stanley Dean Witter, the US securities house, told clients to switch into Tesco, 3p lighter at 169 1/2p.

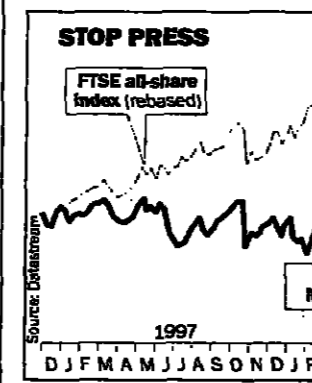
A "double whammy" left Marks & Spencer 2p lighter at 396 1/2p. Standard & Poor's has downgraded its outlook for the retailer from "stable" to "negative" and says the group is less resilient to recession. In addition, Nick Buck at SC Securities, the broker, has cut his forecast for the year from £860 million to £805 million.

A downgrading by Lehman Brothers, the US securities house, failed to rock BSkyB, the satellite broadcaster 40 per cent owned by News International, owner of The Times, steady at 44 1/2p. It has slashed its profit forecast for 1999 from £144 million to £126 million

and for 2000 from £211 million to £186 million. Lehman expects the growth in satellite subscriber numbers to slow as new VAT charges make their impact felt.

Just a couple of days after denying any involvement in bid talks, Wace Group finds itself on the receiving end of an aggressive bid from rival Photobionics. Wace responded with a rise of 10 1/2p to 51p with Photobionics, 1p higher at 239p, offering 52.6p and valuing the company at £41.7 million.

The departure of Ian Holder, finance director, left Groupe Chez Gérard nursing a loss of 4p at 22 1/2p. The price has slumped from a peak of 357 1/2p since the start of the year, which may be of interest to Whitbread, steady at 76 1/2p. City speculators say any further weakness in the shares will prove too tempting for Whitbread, which may be poised with an offer.



is the fourth-largest regional publisher in Britain. It has come down from a peak of 250p and is rated as the preferred "buy" in the sector.

"It performed very robustly during the last downturn due to the high quality of its portfolio and management team", says Ms Stewart. Trinity, unmoved at 40 1/2p, is a big player but appears fairly valued. Newsquest, steady at 235 1/2p, has the highest exposure to advertising, but has fallen a long way already.

Table with columns for 'STOP PRESS', 'FTSE all-share index (rebased)', and 'FTSE 250 index (rebased)'. It contains numerical data and a small line graph.

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Table of international stock market indices including New York (midday), Tokyo, Hong Kong, Amsterdam, Sydney, Frankfurt, Singapore, Brussels, Paris, Zurich, London, and various other regional indices.

Table of UK stock market indices including FTSE 100, FTSE 250, FTSE All-Share, and various sector-specific indices like FTSE Food, FTSE Health, etc.

Table of individual stock prices and movements, including shares like AM VCT, Airtronic, and various pharmaceuticals.

Table of currency exchange rates for various international currencies against the British Pound.

Table of commodity prices for various goods such as oil, wheat, sugar, and other raw materials.

The Pru heads east

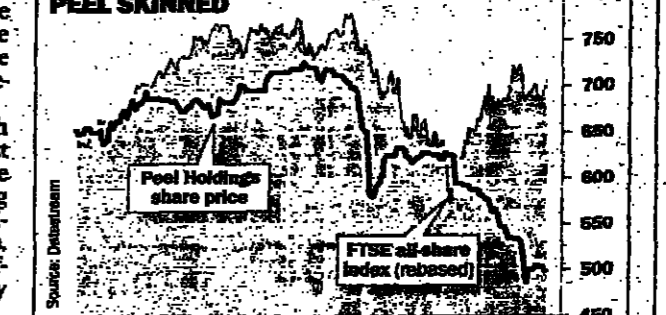
NOT everyone has given up on South-East Asia. Underpinned by the events of last summer and the worrying aura of permanence that surrounds Japan's difficulties, Prudential, the life insurer that brought you Egg, is hatching plans to sell its pensions and investments to the citizens of Hong Kong and Singapore.

To reach the market, the Pru has joined forces with Standard Chartered, the international banking group that has a 150-strong branch network in the region and a reputation for credit quality, perhaps second only to HSBC. Although the venture is initially limited to the two former-British colonies, their partnership could extend eventually to other Far Eastern countries.

Expansion in Asia makes good sense for Prudential. Despite the financial turbulence of the past 14 months, the Far East still holds the promise of strong economic growth looking into the next millennium. The region also remains likely to become the engine of the world economy within the next five to ten years.

The move also shows that Prudential has growth ideas - and brave ones at that - without being drawn into dangerously priced takeover games. To be sure, Prudential is doing little more than dipping its toe in oriental waters by signing this agreement with Standard Chartered. It also follows CGU, which signed a similar deal on general insurance last month. But if it works out, the man from the Pru could soon be knocking on doors in Shanghai and Beijing. Three cheers.

Peel JOHN WHITTAKER, the chairman of Peel Holdings, was sounding pretty gloom yesterday. But in truth, the property company boss was only giving voice to what most in his industry already know. And despite the exposure of this company to the success of the recently opened Trafford Centre, the problems facing Peel are not peculiar to it.



Many property companies are feeling the pinch and those with significant retail square footage - like Peel - have special reason to be nervous. The tricky state of high street sales has meant most publicly quoted retailers have spent the autumn giving warning on future profitability. High street weakness has, unsurprisingly, a knock-on effect on the size and reliability of Peel's rental income flows.

The stock market suffered the gloominess yesterday. Shares actually rose 1 1/2p to 496 1/2p. But the share price damage was done in advance of yesterday's interim results: since July the stock has lost 31 per cent. This market assessment of Peel is too mean, despite the discouraging noises coming from many of Peel's rent payers. At 496 1/2p the shares trade at a whopping 35 per cent discount to stated net asset value, and a 45 per cent discount to consensus NAV forecasts for March 1999. Given that Peel's rental yields range between 7 and 10 per cent, and assuming the economic slowdown is less than cataclysmic, the investment value of its portfolio is in scant danger of being overcooked. Buy.

Alchemy ALCHEMY Partners, which is about to buy Ushers of Trowbridge at 112p a share, seems to have a rather different opinion of the West Country brewer than two of its rival venture capitalists. Normally, private equity funds are scrapping to get into buyout candidates. Schroder Ventures and SBS Equity Partners, however, are so keen to sell their 49 per cent holding that they have accepted a lower price of 106p a share - just to ensure the deal goes through.

It is an unsatisfactory end to Ushers' life as a public company. For most of that time, regional brewers have had all the attractions of lukewarm lager. Given the lack of interest in small cap companies, Ushers should probably never have floated. Just eight months after its flotation at 110p in March 1997, it had to issue a profit warning. But this bid is a case of third time lucky for Alchemy, which has been stalking Ushers for at least a year. A previous 117p-a-share offer foundered after the collapse of a planned securitisation of its pub estate.

Table of commodity prices for various goods such as oil, wheat, sugar, and other raw materials.

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# In hindsight, the year when I got everything wrong

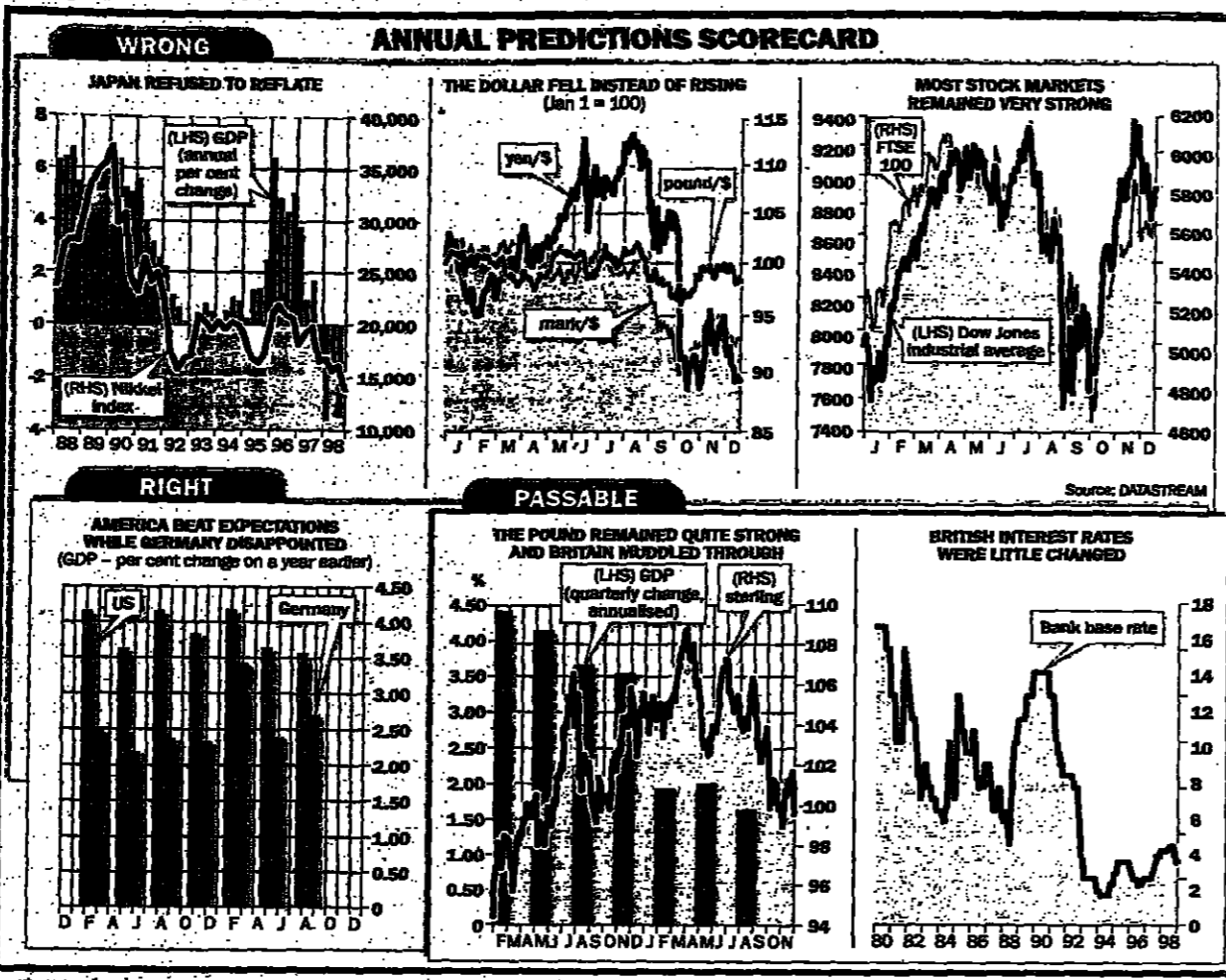
To expect Japan to do the right thing proved to be fatal to my predictions for 1998

In writing this last Economic View of the year and looking back on 12 months in which my economic and financial judgments have proved largely erroneous, I have one consolation. I am in good company. As both President Clinton and his Republican persecutors are by now well aware, the one thing that is definitely worse than making a series of bad mistakes is trying to cover them up or pretending that they never happened.

The principle of cutting one's losses has, of course, been familiar for centuries to operators in financial markets, many of whom would not have been able to survive the turmoil of the August meltdown, or the equally dramatic "meltdown" of the autumn, without a capacity to recognise and admit mistakes. This was the one useful investment tip contained in the book published recently by George Soros, who was himself one of the biggest casualties of the past year's turmoil. Yet economists, financial commentators and politicians have rarely been willing to follow Lord Keynes's famous precept: "When the facts change, I change my mind."

One group of economists, in particular, has traditionally considered itself completely immune from the general principle of human fallibility. These infallible portents of modern economic management have, of course, been the central bankers. In the past few months, however, even some central bankers have discovered the attractions of admitting mistakes. Alan Greenspan, the justly venerated Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board has spent most of the past six months musing about the unprecedented confusion in the world economic outlook and the need to change policy aggressively, even at the risk of making additional mistakes. Charles Goodhart, of the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee has gone even further, arguing in a seminal paper that a central bank that does not keep changing its mind is probably not doing its job.

This, in the confessional spirit of the era of Bill Clinton, Bob Livingston and Henry Hyde, let me begin by explaining where I went most seriously astray. The main mistake I made in the article on this page on January 9 can be summarised by quoting from its first paragraph: "The biggest surprise of 1998 could be the stability of most economies and financial markets. With hindsight that phrase may not seem quite as stupid as it did at the height of the summer's



financial turmoil, when even Mr Greenspan was panicking about the "greatest financial crisis in 50 years". Nevertheless, 1998 was anything but a stable year. And the main reason for the recurrent crises was closely related to the main prediction that I got wrong.

My first prediction for 1998 was that a big Keynesian package in Japan will revive the economy by the summer and offset the global impact of the recession that is now inevitable in the rest of Asia. This mistake was more than enough to undermine my predictions about the other leading economies, which were most about right. I said that, despite the Asian crisis, growth in the US would again prove stronger than expected, and that "Germany would again disappoint. That is roughly how things have turned out."

US growth in 1998 is now expected to be about 3.7 per cent, compared with the 2.4 per cent forecast by the OECD in December last year. Germany's out-turn may now be about 2.5 per cent, instead of 3 per cent — and the economy is showing signs of slowing. Britain is in line to achieve the forecast of 2.2 per cent growth, with signs of acceleration by the middle of next year. But the scale of Japan's collapse — with GDP shrinking by 2.5 per cent instead of the 2.4 per cent growth forecast by official organisations a year ago — completely overwhelmed the better news from other industrialised countries.

In Britain I said the economy would decelerate, but only modestly. I correctly rejected the notion, still widespread in January, that Britain was on the brink of an inflationary boom and that interest rates would keep on rising. How-

ever, I did slightly underestimate the scale of the summer slowdown and was therefore less optimistic about the prospects for interest rate reductions than I should have been. But all these errors paled into insignificance compared to my most fundamental mistake. This was to underestimate the stupidity of the Japanese. Like most Western analysts, including the policymakers in Washington, I had assumed that the Japanese would have learnt from the disastrous consequences of their fiscal tightening in 1997 and would change course — albeit a year too late. But in the event Japanese policymakers proved as stubborn as they

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Japan proved as stubborn as it was stupid. My financial predictions were, if anything, even worse than my predictions about real economic performance. I said that the US and European stock markets would fall by 30 per cent or so, as investors realised that equity valuations would no longer be supported either by higher profits or by lower interest rates. I argued that the Asian crisis would hit profits, while Japanese deflation would obviate lower rates. This prediction may have seemed right in August, but in the end it was thwarted by the paralysis in Japan. Profits did disappoint, but Western interest rates fell sharply because the Fed and the Bank of England were forced to support the world economy in the place of the Japanese.

The one consolation was that I managed to spot the

# High time for the cobbler to repair his children's shoes

For someone so well versed in the art of spin-doctoring, it is surprising that Peter Mandelson made so little mention of marketing in last week's Competitiveness White Paper. After all, unlike many of the issues raised in the White Paper, marketing is something we in the UK are supposed to be good at. Not as good as the Americans, I admit, but much better than, say, the Germans, who seem to be better than us at almost everything else these days. Given that we are supposedly facing an economic downturn, the marketing directors and managers in industry are feeling nervous. Last time we had a recession, at the end of the 1980s, one of the first things to be cut was marketing expenditure. However, looking back, many of the firms that continued spending on advertising and promotion ended up in a better shape than those who thought this might be an easy cost to cut.



JASON NISSE

Conflicting messages are coming from the marketing and advertising world, with some folk saying budgets are being cut and others saying the expenditure is holding up. Much depends on the attitude of who runs the organisation. Some boards are more responsive than others to spending money on marketing. A lot of this might be to do with the make-up of the boards and what voice the marketing people have within the company. The Marketing Society, one of the three trade bodies for the marketing profession, points out that only 12 of the chief executives of FTSE 100 companies come from a marketing background — fewer than those who made their way up from being accountants or engineers. It conducted a survey that showed that one third of companies do not have a main board member responsible for marketing and this gets worse the larger the business becomes — only 108 of the top 250 companies in the UK have marketing officially represented at board level.

Stephen Callender, the direct mail expert who is president of The Marketing Society, argues that this, along with Mr Mandelson's reticence in his White Paper, might be because in the UK we are just not sure about the value of marketing. The old adage that "half of my advertising budget is wasted but I can't be sure which half" haunts business. Board directors can point to the money spent on new machinery, computers or research and development, and measure the results. Often the effect of marketing is harder to quantify. However, look at the current craze for contract-free mobile phones, which has led to the largest boom this growing industry has ever enjoyed and ensured that at least four big companies are having a good Christmas. The popular new idea is not new technology but a repackaging of existing products to take account of what marketing people were hearing from consumers: they don't want to sign up for potentially restrictive contracts. The trouble is that, just as the cobbler's children have holes in their shoes, the marketing profession is not all that good at marketing itself. However, this is something that the profession has come to realise

Sir John Egan, Sir George Ball and Sir Dominic Cadbury on its board, is mostly funded by corporate subscriptions though it receives money from the Department of Trade and Industry for specific projects.

There is now a move to integrate the three groups. The idea will be initially to create an overall co-ordinating group to orchestrate the marketing of marketing as it were. This group will have about three representatives from each of the marketing organisations and will deal with all contact with government and advertising and strategic issues. This will leave the Chartered Institute with its existing role for training and The Marketing Society carrying on with its programme of seminars about marketing issues. Eventually I expect all these organisations to come together into one group. But softly, softly. There are marketing egos to be looked after.

AS IF there was not enough to think about with a recession at Christmas trying people's minds, FRS 10 comes into effect tomorrow. This is the accounting standard that makes companies value intangible assets and write them off through the profit and loss account. This should make more firms think about the value of their brands and may make them more willing to spend to protect them. Alternatively it might make the mean-minded accountants who run most companies reluctant to spend any more money on brands. Perhaps this new marketing body has more work to do than it thought.



Sir Michael Perry of Centrica chairs the Marketing Council

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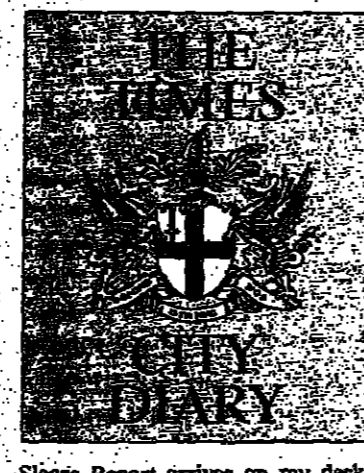
# Homing in

I HEAR that the Naval & Military Club in Piccadilly, better known as the In and Out, may revert to its original use once members have moved out. The club's lease has expired and the Kuwaiti owners are selling the site for redevelopment. Tomorrow staff start to pack up thousands of items for the short journey to the new premises in St James's Square. The building at 94 Piccadilly was the former home of Lord Palmerston, and it had always been assumed that

it was destined to become a hotel. But approaches have been received from several image-rich individuals to convert the In and Out into a London pied-à-terre. The price is not revealed, but offers in the region of, well, anything up to £100 million will probably evince some interest. The number of people prepared to spend this much is understandably limited, but whoever does will end up with about the biggest residence in Central London not owned by someone called Windsor.



Does this mean we'll be safer if the shares crash?



*Sleazebag Report* arrives on my desk, purporting to "expose sleaze, fraud and corruption" in industry, commerce and government. What it does describe in great detail is events surrounding a contract between GEC and a company run by Chris Coverdale, who is editor of *The Sleazebag Report*. His version of events is not one to commend itself to libel lawyers, and I will give it a wide berth. GEC is not commenting, but I suspect the company knows Coverdale well. For his part he is promising to widen his magazine's ambit in succeeding issues. So, up and coming is an expose of how a senior legal authority manipulates court cases, a "false accounting scam" used by GSO companies and the involvement of the big accountants in money laundering. I ask if Coverdale has much in the

# The quiet man

THIS is the season of renewing old ties, so it is time to reach out to the invisible man of Government, the former BP chairman Lord Simon. It has been a quiet year for the man whose rise to ministerial status came just three days after the election. There was that unpleasantness about his BP shares last summer and not much since, aside from some fuss in October about whether he had or had not said we were about to sign up to the euro.

Lord Simon wears two ministerial hats, at the DTI and the Treasury, which makes his invisibility all the more mysterious. He is, I am told, involved in seminars for businesses about how to prepare for the euro, but further details of his schedule are not forthcoming. I will try to provide sightings of this shy and elusive creature in coming days, but I am not entirely hopeful.

# Metal file

IT WOULD NOT be Christmas without a bit of ritual humiliation. This photograph was taken at Inter-capital's Charity Day earlier this month, which raised more than £1.3 million. This is Fred Moreton. By day he is a shy accountant. By night he is, as you see, a heavy metal sex god. You never threw them away, did you, Fred? You knew they would come in handy one day. Like the day your employer suggested you turn up in 1970s gear for a charity do.



Fred Moreton: a rave from the grave for a charity do

THE TIMES UNIT TRUST

Main table of unit trust prices with columns for fund name, price, and change. Includes sections for various fund categories like Equity, Bond, and Money Market.

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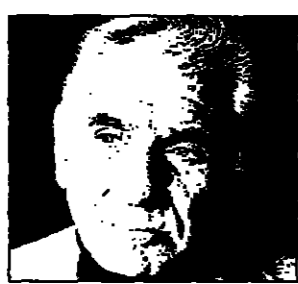
Continuation of unit trust price table, listing various funds and their current market values.

# Shares squeezed higher

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

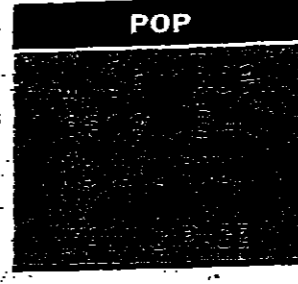
Company	Price	% Chg	P/E
<b>ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES</b>			
Asahi Breweries Ltd	11.35	+0.15	15.2
Carlsberg	15.45	+0.10	14.8
Heineken	14.80	+0.05	15.1
Kirin	10.20	+0.02	14.5
Orion Breweries	11.15	+0.08	14.9
Suntory	12.55	+0.12	15.3
Tasmanian Breweries	11.80	+0.05	14.7
Yokohama Breweries	10.75	+0.03	14.6
<b>BANKS</b>			
ANZ Banking Group	11.50	+0.05	12.5
Bank of America	13.20	+0.08	13.1
Bank of China	10.80	+0.02	12.8
Bank of India	11.40	+0.04	13.0
Bank of Japan	12.10	+0.06	13.2
Bank of Korea	11.90	+0.05	13.0
Bank of New Zealand	11.60	+0.04	12.9
Bank of Queensland	11.70	+0.05	13.0
Bank of South Africa	11.80	+0.05	13.1
Bank of Western Australia	11.90	+0.05	13.2
Bank of China Ltd	11.00	+0.03	12.7
Bank of Communications	10.90	+0.02	12.6
Bank of East Asia	10.80	+0.02	12.5
Bank of Industrial Bank of Japan	10.70	+0.02	12.4
Bank of Industrial Bank of Korea	10.60	+0.02	12.3
Bank of Industrial Bank of Taiwan	10.50	+0.02	12.2
Bank of Industrial Bank of Thailand	10.40	+0.02	12.1
Bank of Industrial Bank of Vietnam	10.30	+0.02	12.0
Bank of Industrial Bank of the Philippines	10.20	+0.02	11.9
Bank of Industrial Bank of Singapore	10.10	+0.02	11.8
Bank of Industrial Bank of Malaysia	10.00	+0.02	11.7
Bank of Industrial Bank of Indonesia	9.90	+0.02	11.6
Bank of Industrial Bank of Brunei	9.80	+0.02	11.5
Bank of Industrial Bank of Cambodia	9.70	+0.02	11.4
Bank of Industrial Bank of Laos	9.60	+0.02	11.3
Bank of Industrial Bank of Myanmar	9.50	+0.02	11.2
Bank of Industrial Bank of Timor-Leste	9.40	+0.02	11.1
Bank of Industrial Bank of Papua New Guinea	9.30	+0.02	11.0
Bank of Industrial Bank of Solomon Islands	9.20	+0.02	10.9
Bank of Industrial Bank of Vanuatu	9.10	+0.02	10.8
Bank of Industrial Bank of Fiji	9.00	+0.02	10.7
Bank of Industrial Bank of Tonga	8.90	+0.02	10.6
Bank of Industrial Bank of Samoa	8.80	+0.02	10.5
Bank of Industrial Bank of Cook Islands	8.70	+0.02	10.4
Bank of Industrial Bank of Niue	8.60	+0.02	10.3
Bank of Industrial Bank of Tokelau	8.50	+0.02	10.2
Bank of Industrial Bank of Kiribati	8.40	+0.02	10.1
Bank of Industrial Bank of Tuvalu	8.30	+0.02	10.0
Bank of Industrial Bank of Palau	8.20	+0.02	9.9
Bank of Industrial Bank of Micronesia	8.10	+0.02	9.8
Bank of Industrial Bank of Marshall Islands	8.00	+0.02	9.7
Bank of Industrial Bank of Northern Mariana Islands	7.90	+0.02	9.6
Bank of Industrial Bank of American Samoa	7.80	+0.02	9.5
Bank of Industrial Bank of Guam	7.70	+0.02	9.4
Bank of Industrial Bank of the Northern Mariana Islands	7.60	+0.02	9.3
Bank of Industrial Bank of the Federated States of Micronesia	7.50	+0.02	9.2
Bank of Industrial Bank of the Republic of the Marshall Islands	7.40	+0.02	9.1
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Bank of Industrial Bank of the Federated States of Micronesia	0.00	+0.02	1.0
Bank of Industrial Bank of the Republic of the Marshall Islands	0.00	+0.02	0.9
Bank of Industrial Bank of the Federated States of Micronesia	0.00	+0.02	0.8
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Bank of Industrial Bank of the Federated States of Micronesia	0.00	+0.02	0.4
Bank of Industrial Bank of the Republic of the Marshall Islands	0.00	+0.02	0.3
Bank of Industrial Bank of the Federated States of Micronesia	0.00	+0.02	0.2
Bank of Industrial Bank of the Republic of the Marshall Islands	0.00	+0.02	0.1
Bank of Industrial Bank of the Federated States of Micronesia	0.00	+0.02	0.0

Company	Price	% Chg	P/E
<b>LEISURE &amp; HOTELS</b>			
Accor Hotels	12.50	+0.10	18.5
Accor Hotels Ltd	11.80	+0.08	17.8
Accor Hotels plc	11.20	+0.06	17.1
Accor Hotels SA	10.60	+0.04	16.4
Accor Hotels NV	10.00	+0.02	15.7
Accor Hotels AG	9.40	+0.01	15.0
Accor Hotels AS	8.80	+0.01	14.3
Accor Hotels SE	8.20	+0.01	13.6
Accor Hotels ES	7.60	+0.01	12.9
Accor Hotels PT	7.00	+0.01	12.2
Accor Hotels BR	6.40	+0.01	11.5
Accor Hotels IN	5.80	+0.01	10.8
Accor Hotels KR	5.20	+0.01	10.1
Accor Hotels JP	4.60	+0.01	9.4
Accor Hotels AU	4.00	+0.01	8.7
Accor Hotels NZ	3.40	+0.01	8.0
Accor Hotels SG	2.80	+0.01	7.3
Accor Hotels MY	2.20	+0.01	6.6
Accor Hotels TH	1.60	+0.01	5.9
Accor Hotels VN	1.00	+0.01	5.2
Accor Hotels PH	0.40	+0.01	4.5
Accor Hotels ID	0.00	+0.01	3.8
Accor Hotels BI	0.00	+0.01	3.1
Accor Hotels TL	0.00	+0.01	2.4
Accor Hotels FM	0.00	+0.01	1.7
Accor Hotels MK	0.00	+0.01	1.0
Accor Hotels LA	0.00	+0.01	0.3
Accor Hotels MM	0.00	+0.01	0.0
Accor Hotels KH	0.00	+0.01	0.0
Accor Hotels CN	0.00	+0.01	0.0
Accor Hotels HK	0.00	+0.01	0.0
Accor Hotels TW	0.00	+0.01	0.0
Accor Hotels SG	0.00	+0.01	0.0
Accor Hotels MY	0.00	+0.01	0.0
Accor Hotels TH	0.00	+0.01	0.0
Accor Hotels VN	0.00	+0.01	0.0
Accor Hotels PH	0.00	+0.01	0.0
Accor Hotels ID	0.00	+0.01	0.0
Accor Hotels BI	0.00	+0.01	0.0
Accor Hotels TL	0.00	+0.01	0.0
Accor Hotels FM	0.00	+0.01	0.0
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Accor Hotels TW	0.00	+0.01	0.0
Accor Hotels SG	0.00	+0.01	0.0
Accor Hotels MY	0.00	+0.01	0.0
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Accor Hotels TH	0.00	+0.01	0.0
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Accor Hotels CN	0.00	+0.01	0.0
Accor Hotels HK	0.00	+0.01	0.0
Accor Hotels TW	0.00	+0.01	0.0
Accor Hotels SG	0.00	+0.01	0.0
Accor Hotels MY	0.00	+0.01	0.0
Accor Hotels TH	0.00	+0.01	0.0
Accor Hotels VN	0.00	+0.01	0.0
Accor Hotels PH	0.00	+0.01	0.0
Accor Hotels ID	0.00	+0.01	0.0
Accor Hotels BI	0.00	+0.01	0.0
Accor Hotels TL	0.00	+0.01	0.0
Accor Hotels FM	0.00	+0.01	0.0
Accor Hotels MK	0.00	+0.01	0.0
Accor Hotels LA	0.00	+0.01	0.0
Accor Hotels MM	0.00	+0.01	0.0
Accor Hotels KH	0.00	+0.01	0.



MUSIC Leonard Bernstein's satire blunted THIS PAGE

ARTS



RECOMMENDED TODAY

Guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Merril Hargle

LONDON THE GOLDEN COCKEREL... THE PRINCE OF EGYPT... THE KING AND I... THE SHOWMADE...

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ARCHITECTURE: Marcus Binney has a better plan for mighty Oxford Castle than a mere hotel conversion

The Americans call it "adaptive re-use" and it has been the banner under which thousands of historic buildings in Britain have taken on a new lease of life...

A mess at wit's end

The textual problems of Leonard Bernstein's Broadway opera make those of Verdi's Don Carlos seem as clear-headed as ABC...

CONCERT

el of sophistication was that of an end-of-term show at a very minor public school indeed. Musical compensations were few and far between...

Large advertisement for Cambridge Theatre featuring various plays like 'The Nutsacker', 'The Best Actor', 'The Showman', and 'The King and I'. Includes contact information and showtimes.

**VISUAL ART:** In Christmas week Richard Cork explores one of the most moving Nativities produced in the Renaissance

# Laughter of the Innocenti

**W**hen Filippo Brunelleschi was invited to design Florence's Innocenti Hospital in 1419, he made sure that the result heralded the momentous advent of an architectural rebirth. For the first Foundling Hospital in the world was the earliest building to apply the new classical ideas of the Tuscan Renaissance style. While he remained faithful to the Gothic tradition in his dome for the city's cathedral, Brunelleschi effectively inaugurated the Renaissance in the Piazza SS. Annunziata near by. He made every effort, in the hospital facade, to let the Italian heat and light penetrate its graceful colonnaded structure. Modest and companionable, the Innocenti has an inviting aura wholly at one with its pioneering purpose.

Established to care for infants "deserted by their parents contrary to the law of nature", the building gains enormously in symbolic value from the loggia that Brunelleschi provided behind its slender Corinthian columns. By opening the Innocenti out into a great city square, he implied that it should not be regarded as a home for shameful outcasts. Instead of finding themselves shunned by society, the foundlings were given a sun-filled gathering point where Florentines could laze on the steps and savour the life of the city around them.

This air of welcome is confirmed by the celebrated coloured terracotta medallions installed around 1427 in the spandrels of the colonnade. Andrea della Robbia, who produced a figure of a swaddled baby for each medallion, made them enrich the meaning of the building. Another sculptor might have disrupted the Innocenti's refined design, but della Robbia reinforced its commitment to the care of the children in its charge. Far from producing sculptural embellishments so neutral that they pass unnoticed by anyone entering the Innocenti, he made his medallions declare "the building's aim in a robust and open manner. The infants' outstretched arms must have seemed to offer a warm-hearted greeting to their flesh-and-blood counterparts as they approached the hospital.

The chronic financial troubles that afflicted the Innocenti for a while might have led some visitors to conclude that the "terracotta babies", as they are called in a record of pay-

ment, were holding out their arms to plead for generous donations. But the truth is that their gestures are ambiguous, encompassing both affirmation and melancholy. Their most prominent and positive meaning was memorably defined in E.M. Forster's *A Room with a View*, which young Lucy Honeychurch wanders through "those grey-brown streets" to the great Square of the Annunziata and comes upon the medallions with "those divine babies whom no cheap reproduction can ever stale. There they stood, with their shining limbs bursting from the garments of charity, and their strong white arms extended against circles of heaven. Lucy thought she had never seen anything more beautiful."

But the infants' outspread arms carry a suggestion of suffering as well. Like many images of the Christ child in Renaissance paintings, with their prophecies of the Crucifixion to come, they convey the pain of martyrdom as well as the joy of birth.

Inside the Innocenti, now preserved as a museum for the treasures it contains, the infant Christ appears at His most blithe. Luca della Robbia, the oldest and most impressive of the family's three sculptors, made a delightfully intimate enameled terracotta group called *The Madonna of the Innocents*.

**"The images convey pain as well as joy"**

della Robbia, the oldest and most impressive of the family's three sculptors, made a delightfully intimate enameled terracotta group called *The Madonna of the Innocents*.

**A**lthough smaller than Andrea's babies on the facade, it makes a virtue out of modest dimensions by presenting the relationship between mother and child with the utmost freshness. Dignified she may be, but the Virgin's chubby features denote a very young woman who has no intention of stressing her divine authority in an aloof manner. On the contrary, she seems simple, approachable individual, unfettered even by a halo. The hood defining an oval around her face is graceful enough to provide the madonna with an aura, after all, and the small rose brooch attached to the cloak at the base of her neck is more captivating than a thousand elaborate jewels.

The baby held familiarly in her arm enjoys a close rapport with his mother. He appears quite naked, and leans against her body with conspicuous relaxation. Even though he holds out a scroll announcing that "I am the light of the world", there is nothing didac-

tic or sanctimonious about His stance. The holy child brandishes the inscription with disarming playfulness, pointing at the words and yet managing to imply that they convey a meaning as festive as a welcoming banner at a party.

The prior of the Innocenti subsequently ensured that his institution continued to employ artists with the most scrupulous care. In 1488, soon after the installation of Andrea's medallions, he drew up a detailed contract for a large altar panel by Domenico Ghirlandaio. Astonishingly well-preserved, *The Adoration of the Magi* still hangs there today as the



Images of the Innocenti: left, Ghirlandaio's *The Adoration of the Magi*; right (above and below) Luca della Robbia's *Madonna of the Innocents* and Andrea della Robbia's *Innocenti Child*

finest work of art commissioned by the hospital. Ghirlandaio, one of the leading artists in late quattrocento Florence, fulfilled his contract to the letter. Preserved in the Innocenti archive, the document was drawn up by "the Jesuata brother" Fra Bernardo di Francesco. It insisted that Ghirlandaio should "colour and paint the said panel all with his own hand in the manner shown in a drawing on paper with those figures and in that manner shown in it, in every particular according to what I, Fra Bernardo, think best... and he must colour the panel at his own expense

with good colours and with powdered gold on such ornaments as demand it."

The contract's zealously attention to quality and materials alike received its reward in the final painting, where Ghirlandaio produced an exceptionally rich and elaborate interpretation of the Adoration theme. The Innocenti's function was prominently acknowledged, doubtless at Bernardo's bidding, by the inclusion of two children kneeling in prayer at the forefront. Both seem to be protected by the voluminous robes of the figures

near by, and one bearded magus draws attention to the infant in his charge with the wave of an avuncular hand. As if in response, the other magi leave a space between them that enables the child to look past the cluster of meticulously painted flowers and see the Virgin and offspring beyond.

More formal than their counterparts in Luca della Robbia's sculpture, they are nevertheless flanked by the stable's earthbound animals rather than ethereal saints. Both mother and son raise their hands to bless the awed figures gathered eagerly around

them. The central magus is so overcome that he leans forward, clasps the Christ child's foot and kisses His toes. But the spirit of beneficence permeating the central group is contrasted with an agitated scene beyond. There, the luminous serenity of a Tuscan landscape is violated by the massacre of the innocents in all its brutality and despair. Mothers scream and clutch their babies as the soldiers' swords descend, and several infants are already left to die on the ground like the foundlings so often abandoned on the streets of Florence.

By taking the unusual step



of incorporating this earlier biblical episode in the altarpiece, Ghirlandaio and Bernardo emphasised the danger threatening any foundling who failed to find a home in an institution such as the Innocenti. Its role is affirmed above all by the building above the Virgin and her sacred, newborn child. Nobly proportioned pillars rise up to a roof where singing angels hover on clouds. The notable sturdiness of this structure, coupled with the placid waters of the lake it frames, implies that shelter is available for every unwanted child who needs support, protection and sustaining love.

By taking the unusual step

**AROUND THE GALLERIES**

**T**IS the season not only to be jolly but to turn, as every year, towards Chris Beetles in search of originals by classic British illustrators. On the walls of the Ryder Street gallery are some 700 drawings and watercolours. A lot of them, in consequence, are quite small: there are, for example, some delicious but virtually microscopic Kate Greenaways. This year's show, the seventeenth, seems to place a bit more emphasis on contemporaries, but that is fine, since there is no lack of artists born in the Fifties, such as Paul Cox, Emma Chichester Clark and Simon Drew, who keep up the good old traditions with gusto. There are also some amazing Beckhams and fine selections of old Beatles standbys like Heath Robinson and E.H. Shepherd.

8510 Ryder Street, SW1 (0171-839 7551), Mon-Sat 10am-5.30pm, until Jan 22

**T**HERE is a slightly nursery-rhyme atmosphere surrounding the Christmas show at the Boundary Gallery — perhaps because of its whimsical title, *The Potter, the Painter and the Cut-Out Maker*. The potter is Ying Yeung Li, a British-trained Chinese painter and photographer who has taken to ceramics with a fine disregard for the general conventions. The painter is a Swede, Hilda Wängård, whose abstract work hovers ever on the verge of representation, since she gradually lets a hint of a human figure slip in among the vivid patterns of colour. The cut-out maker is Mervyn Charlton, whose new works are like figures and objects taken from his mythologising canvases, but painted on thin sheets of metal and then cut to shape, so that they free-hang happily on the wall.

98 Boundary Road, NW8 (0171-624 1126), Wed-Sat 11am-6pm, until Jan 9

JOHN RUSSELL TAYLOR



Daniel O'Donnell: uncool and loved by millions

**Smelling sweet**

**I**t has been a good year for UB40. The well-received release of *Labour of Love III*, the last in the series of covers compilations, hauled the Birmingham band out of a career slump which at one stage saw several UK shows cancelled because of poor ticket sales. In Britain, at the sold-out penultimate date of an extensive tour, it was hard to believe that UB40's fans had ever strayed. From the instant that the ten-strong outfit appeared the audience cheered and swayed as though at a rowdy family get-together.

Perhaps to underline their turnaround in fortunes, UB40 began with *Come Back Darling*, the new album's debut single, which became a surprise Top Ten hit in early autumn. A Johnny Osbourne cover, the track is typical of the group's most recent material, which eschews popular influences in favour of roots reggae. Most of the crowd — a predominantly white mix of twenty and thirtysomethings —

## Warm as winter drawers

**I**n less politically correct times, the 37-year-old Irish balladeer Daniel O'Donnell would have been called the housewives' favourite. His fans have probably never heard of Massive Attack or Fatboy Slim. In fact, they mostly don't even go into record stores at all. O'Donnell's albums tend to get slipped into the supermarket shopping trolley along with the catfood. He shifts huge quantities through QVC, the television shopping channel. His fan club offers tea-cosies and oven gloves decorated with his clean-cut features. As a marketing operation it is probably without parallel.

His audience on the first of two sold-out nights at Wembley was 90 per cent elderly and adoring women and he clearly had a unique rapport with them. O'Donnell prides himself on his relationship with his fans. After every concert he will spend a couple of hours posing for photographs

and signing autographs and he seems to know thousands of his fans by name. Derided by the critics and ignored by radio, he is supported by an invisible army that verges on the fanatical in its devotion.

But what of the music itself? There is no doubt that O'Donnell is very good at what he does. He is a bland singer of standards and covers who substitutes sentiment for emotion and schmaltz for feeling. But he transports his audience. This was showtime on a grand scale, spread across two stages and with a supporting cast that included a children's choir. But it was also

**POP**

**Television's cover girl**

**T**he concept of a music-orientated television show creating an overnight singing star may seem to belong in the era when the Monkees ruled the Earth. But the persuasive powers of the goggle-box have bestowed belated stardom on Vonda Shepard. The New York-born, Los Angeles-raised singer-writer released her first major-label album in 1989, when, aged 26, her résumé included classical piano training and session credits with Al Jarreau and Rickie Lee Jones. But Shepard's career failed to take off until she bought what turned out to be pop's equivalent of the jackpot lottery ticket, the musical role in the hit series *Ally McBeal*.

Even if she had to cede cover status on her own *Songs From Ally McBeal* album to the show's star, Calista Flockhart, the weekly exposure on such a ratings winner has added an improbable platinum sheen to Shepard's reputation. It also led on Sunday night to an

Empire's-worth of Channel 4 viewers at what Shepard proudly described as her first-ever headlining London show.

Nailing her colours to this particular TV mast has required the artist to relinquish some creative sovereignty, and although she recently enjoyed a Top Ten single with her self-composed title song for the series, *Searchin' My Soul*, much of the programme, the album and this show were the stuff of upmarket pop karaoke.

Shepard and her five-piece opened with one of the hidden gems in Smokey Robinson's songwriting jewelbox, *Ask the Lonely*; song another Four Tops hit, *Walk Away Renee*, was producing shivers — but sensitive as the cover was, they were at the thought of Levi Stubbs's performance on the original.

Shepard's own creations, including *Maryland* from the series and *Lucky Life* from her last solo record, were a different proposition, her strong, confident and soulful voice now applied to songs of the reflective maturity she announced those many years ago.

If the ambience of a top-drawer covers band never quite went away, that was precisely what the punters came for, and by the time the band pumped out *It's In His Kiss* and *Tell Him*, their frontwoman had made the area her very own Shepard's Bush, and the night had become an oversized office party.

**NIGEL WILLIAMSON**

**PAUL SEXTON**

## A potter through verse and worse

**S**poke for Poet Laureate? If the number of people willing to turn out to hear him on a chilly pre-Christmas evening is any guide, he would not lack support. Whether they expected to hear quite so much verse is another matter. The tried and trusted format of "An Evening With..." is usually the cue for a judicious mixture of performance, celebrity chat and anecdote. Although a brief question and answer session emerged at the end, this audience with the father of modern British comedy turned out to be closer to a conventional poetry reading.

"Conventional" being a relative term, of course, as far as he is concerned. Poetry recitals are usually accompanied by fanfare and warm white wine. Milligan's potted verse, a passing tribute to his old favourite William McGonagall and other pieces constructed with all the stark simplicity of haiku. As betis the author of *Silly Verse For Kids*, his children played a prominent role. His grandchildren too — or "trainee murderers" as he preferred to describe them in his cheerfully exasperated way.

Otherwise his thoughts continually returned to the other end of the cycle of life — death and dissolution. The more sombre material — including distant reflections from the A-bomb era and a memorial to a comrade killed in battle — had a standardised, common-room air to them. When he adopted a mischievous, sideways-on stance, the words began to sing. Whether he was describing a bird crushed by a car tyre on a motorway or his fervent desire to avoid being cremated in Golders Green.

**COMEDY**

**Spike Milligan**



Spike Milligan: Goon fishing for compliments

we immediately heard a distinctive voice taking flight. Milligan had dispensed a jovial papal blessing when he made his entrance. Resting in an armchair at the end, he was too frail to make very much of the question-and-answer session. Though the wit still flickered, What did he think death would be like? Much like now, he replied with a weary grin.

Some sturdy stand-up jokes made an appearance, and his Irish ancestry prompted more than one bawdy gem. When a tout demands £200 for a ticket outside a Lansdowne Road rugby international, an indignant Milligan points out that he could buy the pretiest woman in Dublin for that. Ah yes, says the tout, but why would you get 40 minutes each way with a band playing in the middle?

CLIVE DAVIS

# LAW

## How much do we owe Josie and her father?

Critics say the compensation scheme can be mean and unfair. Frances Gibb reports

What price should be put on the death or injury of a loved one? How can someone be compensated for pain and suffering when a relative is the victim of violent crime? In the scale of such tragedies, Josie Russell — left for dead after her mother Lin and sister Megan were bludgeoned to death — rates among the worst. Yet the payments to her and her father Shaun from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority have come under attack.

For losing her mother, Josie was awarded £2,000 a year until she was 18. Later £43,000 was added for childcare. But nothing was included for her father's loss of earnings. Dr Shaun Russell is a lecturer whose basic income was £22,500 a year. He decided to work only part-time in order to look after Josie who needs help with reading and writing. After a media furore, he was awarded £16,490, in total, for loss of income until Josie is 18.

Sarah Harman, the solicitor for the Russells, argues that the present compensation scheme, determined largely by a fixed tariff, is unjust and in need of radical overhaul. "Tony Blair talks about giving people what they want," she says. "First, they want to be protected from crime, but if there is a crime they want people compensated for it. I feel we have a responsibility as a society towards those like Josie and her family."

The tariff-based scheme is three years old and replaced one based on common law principles that allowed for greater discretion. The idea was to bring its £220 million budget under control and make it more predictable. But the broad-brush approach has meant some injustices. Chief of these, Ms Harman says, is that the old scheme — for all its unwieldiness — bore some relation to damages awarded in civil cases.

This is starkly illustrated in Dr Russell's case. He and Josie will receive a second award for their personal injuries. Josie's will be decided soon; it could be £40,000 to cover shock, scarring and brain damage — taking into account her job prospects. Dr Russell received £7,500 for post-traumatic stress. But the tariff provides only one payment, £7,500, for the mental effects of such a trauma lasting more than a year — or a maximum payment of £20,000 for permanent mental disability. There is nothing in between.

"It is hard," Ms Harman says, "to justify the maximum in a case like Shaun Russell's because he is so stoical. What is the justification for assuming that a victim of a crime of violence will get over stress in a year or so, or never recover?"

The gap between what vic-



Josie Russell: Her father, who decided to work only part-time to help with her reading, was awarded £16,490 for loss of income

### ON THE ROAD FOR JOSIE

□ Nicholas Baldock, a marathon runner, will run the length of the United States — 3,100 miles — in May to raise money for Josie Russell. Mr Baldock, from Widdow, Hertfordshire, says: "I was spurred into action when I heard about Josie's compensation award. Her tragedy touched the hearts of the nation and I am appealing for people to sponsor my run."

● Details: Eva Christofis, project co-ordinator: 01943-603 825

tim of a medical or car accident recover in civil courts is evident in other ways: Josie gets £2,000 a year for losing her mother; in a recent civil case, a girl was awarded £22,500 a year for the same loss. Rape is another area: rape by one attacker qualifies for £7,500 — more may be given for post-traumatic stress, although the scheme heavily discounts for second or multiple injuries. But a recent rape case within a private hospital could lead to a payout from the hospital of up to £70,000.

Peter Spurgeon, chief executive of the authority, insists that the scheme is among the most generous, paying out 40 per cent of the world total of compensation to victims of crime. It helps 40,000 to 50,000 people a year, paying from £1,000 to £500,000.

Mr Spurgeon accepts that the old scheme was more flexible. But in some ways the new one is more generous: if a child was murdered, then only the mother could claim a bereavement award and only for a child under 18. Now there is no age limit and a natural father can also claim. A victim of

crime suffering serious brain damage can expect up to £250,000 — in the civil courts. General damages could be half that.

One reason for the huge awards in the civil courts is that they also include amounts for punitive or exemplary damages or other factors. But there is a limit to what the taxpayer can pay. Mr Spurgeon denies as a "travesty of the truth" that Josie's award was increased after media pressure. The first sum was an interim one only, he insists, and there had always been more to come.

Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, has promised a review of the scheme, but no more money. Shaun Russell, meanwhile, is amazingly positive. He has been offered some academic work; and many people have made donations for Josie (which go into a trust fund).

"I feel very lucky," he says. "Josie is improving, but we still have to see how she turns out in the long term. You have to accept that the awards are a token; they are not trying to compensate for the loss of your wife and place a value on that. It is a kind of gesture on behalf of the State. And I am quite happy with that."

## The case for banishing M'lud from the Lords

Robert Stevens examines the Pinochet case

The decision of five law lords to overturn their colleagues' earlier ruling — that General Augusto Pinochet could be extradited for his actions when he was the leader of Chile — because of Lord Hoffmann's uncharacteristic breach of natural justice is fascinating in the short run. In the long run, the significance is greater. It raises the basic issue of the role of the judiciary and how that needs to be adapted to this Government's commitment to constitutional reform.

In a year the Human Rights Act will be in operation. One has only to look at the Pinochet case itself to appreciate the different perspectives held by members of the judiciary. Yet so far successive governments have resisted a judicial appointments commission, which would provide some transparency about judicial views at the time of appointment. Lord Mackay of Clashfern, the former Lord Chancellor, resisted such a development for the same reasons that he resisted the incorporation of the European Convention on Human Rights — namely, that this would expose judges' preferences (prejudices, if you will) to public view.

One can understand the discomfort this might cause. Yet it seems odd that English judges are still appointed by the Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine of Lairg, a member of the Cabinet, after informal consultation with the judges. Just as issues of natural justice are based on a concern that justice should not only be done but be seen to be done — something Lord Hoffmann apparently forgot — so, too, in a modern democracy judges should not be selected solely by politicians and lawyers behind a cloak of secrecy, particularly as the judiciary has moved into far more political waters during the past 30 years. No serious person wants a repetition of America's *Bork* or Thomas hearings. But just as Israel now has members of the Knesset and Cabinet members on the judicial appointments committee, as the Israeli Supreme Court has moved more into the centre of the political stage, and as the Constitutional Convention in South Africa allowed public hearings for the judges of the Supreme Court, so, too, there is a need for openness in Britain. When he was in opposition Lord Irvine was in favour of a judicial appointments committee. When he came into office he "put it on the back burner". Last week he apparently decided that he was opposed to one. The Hoffmann case means that he has to rethink his position.

More important, the new case raised issues

about the role of the Lord Chancellor himself. The United Kingdom is strange in that it has its final court of appeal sitting in panels. The orality of the English trial almost demands it. But who chooses these panels? It is all a little mysterious. *De jure* it is the Lord Chancellor, *de facto* the senior law lord. But supposing Lord Irvine had decided to sit either on the original Pinochet cases or at the rehearing? What if he decides to chair the next Pinochet hearing — and we are running short of law lords? Would this be appropriate? The time may well have come when the Lord Chancellor should cease to sit as a judge.

The Pinochet case highlights another aspect of the separation of powers. The idea of having the final court of appeal being one of the legislative Houses is itself irrational. In the 1860s and 1870s those two great Lord Chancellors — Lord Cairns, the Conservative, and Lord Selborne, the Liberal — agreed that the time to separate the legislative and judicial bodies had come. In 1873 the Judicature Act abolished appeals to the House of Lords and set up the Imperial Court of Appeals sitting in The Strand. It was only a group of Tory right-wing mavericks led by Sir William Charles, aided and abetted by

### The final court of appeal should be seen to be independent of the legislature

of the final appeal to the House of Lords for the purpose of "dignity".

If we are serious about constitutional reform and the separation of powers, it is time that the final court of appeal should be seen to be independent of the legislature. Most important of all, the law lords should not be sitting in a legislative body. It is always said that the law lords do not speak on non-legal matters. It depends what you mean by non-legal. Lord Goddard defended hanging and demanded the reintroduction of flogging in the 1950s. Parker followed suit. In the 1960s and 1970s the law lords, led by Lords Hodson and Mervin, impeded divorce reform. In the 1980s the judges, led by Lords Ackner and Donaldson, offered bizarre reasons for attacking Lord Mackay's efforts to reform the legal profession.

It is useful to have good lawyers in the Upper House. It is useful to have good lawyers in the Lower House, but the Commons has managed to achieve that without having any judges sitting with it. It would be an important constitutional step forward for judges to be banished from any reformed House of Lords.

● Dr Stevens is Master of Pembroke College, Oxford, the author of *The Independence of the Judiciary* (OUP 1997).

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## Legal DIARY

JUDGES' wives and partners are in for a higher profile if — as Lord Irvine of Lairg, the Lord Chancellor, predicts — there is to be more media scrutiny of judges' interests and affiliations.

One not averse to using the media is Lady Bingham of Cornhill, the Lord Chief Justice's wife. She is in the vanguard of a campaign for government action on anti-malarial drugs to Sudan after the US bombing of the Al-Shifra pharmaceutical factory. This is said to have destroyed half the country's production.

She told Radio 4's *Today* programme yesterday that the Government should look at the problem because it supported

the bombing. Without the supplies, "thousands of people will die," she said.

Lady Bingham has written on the matter to Clare Short, the International Development Secretary.

□ GARETH PEIRCE, the solicitor who has been a leading figure in the struggle to prove that a series of convictions linked to the IRA's terrorist campaign were miscarriages of justice, has made a surprising admission. Though Emma Thompson played the part of Ms Peirce in the film, *In the Name of the Father*, the movie about the Guildford Four, Ms Peirce told the Home Affairs Select Committee that she has not

seen the film. That is, perhaps, just as well.

The film-makers took a few liberties with the hallowed traditions of the legal system — such as setting the trial in a semi-circular court and allowing wild cheering and clapping when the solicitor made her appeal to the judge.

□ DAVID PRICE, the solicitor who helped John McVicar to defend — unsuccessfully — a libel action brought by Linford Christie, has lodged a challenge to Britain's libel laws at the European Court of Human Rights. The laws breach human rights, he says; there is no legal aid and the burden of proof is on the journalist. The libel laws, he adds, are based in the 18th century.

## QUEEN'S COUNSEL

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HITACHI

# Computers versus crime

The courts are benefiting from a boost in funds as IT is championed as the launchpad for a new legal system, explains Geoff Hoon

Is a court a place or a service? Could people go to court by video-conferencing? Is the Internet an answer to people's need for legal help and advice? Some of these questions were debated recently at a one-day event organised by the Lord Chancellor's Department. The idea was to discuss plans put forward as part of the Government's information technology strategy for the next five to 15 years — a long-term view of how best to resolve and avoid disputes in the formation age.

Exactly how advanced IT might revolutionise the civil courts is the subject of a recent published consultation paper from the Lord Chancellor's Department. The paper, entitled *Civil Justice* and available on the LCD website [www.open.gov.uk/cj](http://www.open.gov.uk/cj) is part of our plans for an IT strategy for the start of the next millennium.

Important steps have already been taken to provide IT support for the justice system. A list of court systems in tune with the needs of our customers and centralised systems, handling bulk-processing of routine civil work, have brought real improvements in the quality of service offered to consumers.

There is still a long way to go, but opportunities exist to use IT imaginatively. In the LCD several important initiatives are under way in which IT will play a key role in delivering greater accessibility, speed and efficiency to the justice system.

In the criminal arena, the magistrates' and Crown Courts are at the heart of the justice process. A single national IT system to support the core business of the former and, crucially, to provide electronic links with other criminal justice agencies, is a key aim. A project team will soon finalise the award of a contract for the development of this system —

known as Libra — as a public/private partnership for a continuing programme for the magistrates' courts.

The Crown Court is looking at ways in which technology can speed up the progress of cases using electronic case-flow through the criminal justice system, and to improve the administration of justice. IT could be used to streamline and improve the way in which jurors are summoned and to ensure that they receive better, speedier information about their role. In the courtroom, we want evidence presented electronically, to make trials swifter and simpler, so that jurors can fully understand the sometimes complex nature of the material put before them.

The criminal justice system is an example of how collaboration between agencies could have enormous benefits overall.

We must ensure a design with integration and information-sharing in mind. For this reason, it is the importance of the integrating business and information systems initiative — a joint venture between the Home Office, LCD and Crown Prosecution Service, covering IT systems and related business processes. It offers an opportunity for a truly strategic approach to the delivery of IT within the criminal justice system.

There will be new IT investment to meet the needs of the criminal justice system as a whole, not simply to satisfy any one agency or organisation. Within the civil system, our priorities are set on delivery of the Government's civil justice reforms. Court staff and the judiciary will be provided with the necessary IT support for handling defended cases. The system will eventually allow users to set, monitor and progress case timetables in the way recommended by Lord Woolf. Other important



Hot chips: IT could provide links between various criminal justice agencies

civil projects are also under way, including further centralisation of bulk processes such as the issue of default summons through the provision of electronic data interchange facilities.

It is vitally important to take a long-term view of the civil justice system, and to look at how

IT might fundamentally transform legal services and a citizen's access to justice. Our paper is the first step. It raises radical possibilities and challenges conventional assumptions in order to provoke stimulating discussion with all users of the system. We hope to achieve an agreed and realistic strategy on which future plans for the development of technology can be based on the long-term health, success and international reputation of our justice system.

The author is Minister of State at the Lord Chancellor's Department.

# Are you ready for the shake-up of the century?

There is disquiet about reforms to civil justice, due to start in April. Grania Langdon-Down reports

Are lawyers ready for the biggest shake-up to civil justice this century? There are four months to April 26 — or W-Day. That is when Lord Woolf's overhaul of civil justice takes effect. But the Law Society and the Bar fear many lawyers have underestimated the scale of the reforms and the planning and training needed.

The reforms aim to cut costs and delays in civil disputes. There will be one set of court procedures with cases assigned to one of three court "tracks" according to the value of the claim. But the new rules and practice directions will not be published until January and the information technology needed to help judges to control and manage cases will not be ready until at least 2000. In the face of warnings that the "big bang" approach could endanger the reforms, the Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine of Lairg, says they are pressing ahead with the April 26 start date "with our eyes wide open".

Suzanne Burn, secretary of the Law Society's civil litigation committee, says: "We have taken the view all along that the Government has rushed the reforms. It would not have done any harm to have given six months grace from when everything is published. Hopefully, we won't have too many solicitors ringing up in April saying 'what's this all about?' But some practices will not be ready."

City solicitors Rosling King, City solicitors, is spending £90,000 in lost time, training its staff. But Georgina Squire, head of its litigation department, believes "the profession generally is nowhere near ready — yet the reforms are absolutely revolutionary".

From April, lawyers will no longer control how long cases take to get to trial, with deadlines imposed by the court. Much more work will have to be done before claims are issued because they cannot be amended later. The new standard disclosure rules will be much more restricted than current discovery procedure. It is likely that legal privilege will be lost on the instruction of expert witnesses. The pressure will be to settle, with the emphasis on alternative dispute resolution, and tough penalties for unreasonably forcing a case to court.

There is disquiet about reforms to civil justice, due to start in April. Grania Langdon-Down reports

The reforms' aims of cutting costs and delays. King feels there is little understanding of the effects. "A lot of disputes are dealt with in-house before lawyers become involved. Yet if someone inadvertently makes an admission of liability in a fast-track case they are going to be stuck with it and will have to pay the damages that flow from it."

"Courts will set timetables and if that means completing witness statements when you are due on holiday, the holiday will have to go. Companies will have to decide who will sign the new statement of truth that must accompany claims or defences and who will confirm that all the relevant documents have been disclosed — who will want to be responsible for checking everything? It will be difficult to amend statements later, so much more work will have to be done at an earlier stage, with front loading of costs."

John Lambert, acting head of the Manchester intellectual property chambers Lancaster Buildings, has written a guide on the reforms for his clients. He says judges would have to use their discretion in cases where counsel or barristers were unprepared or risk penalising their clients. "I think the rules may be bent a little at the beginning by sympathetic judges to let the system work."

His advice to law firms and chambers is to embrace the reforms as a good business opportunity. "The law has become so expensive, clients have cut down on legal services. This is a great opportunity to do better."

The reforms have created a boom in training courses and conferences. Professor Nigel Savage, chief executive of the College of Law, says it is providing training for judges and solicitors, and clients, particularly insurance companies, who fund the litigation.

Meanwhile, Eversheds, the national law firm, has carried out a survey of companies and public sector bodies which found that the change in culture is a glimmer in litigants' eyes. About 80 per cent said they had seen no improvement in the litigation process; and they did not expect the reforms to cut the amount of commercial litigation in 1999. Three in four expected the same number of business disputes and thought most of them would be settled in court.

We think that the reforms have been rushed

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The Lord Chancellor invites applications from suitably qualified persons to serve as Deputy District Judges in England and Wales from 1 April 2000 OR Deputy District Judges of the Principal Registry of the Family Division in London from 1 June 1999.

Applicants for Deputy District Judge appointments must have held a right of audience in any part of proceedings in any part of the Supreme Court or in all proceedings in the county courts or magistrates' courts for a period of seven years on 1 April 2000. Deputy District Judges are expected to sit judicially for at least 20 but not more than 50 days each year. Appointment is initially for a probationary period of 18 months and will be renewed if that period is completed satisfactorily.

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Applicants for both posts should normally be aged between 35 and 60.

The Lord Chancellor will appoint the candidates who appear to him to be best qualified regardless of ethnic origin, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, political affiliation, religion or disability, except where the disability prevents the fulfilment of the physical requirements of the office.

An application form, together with a job description and note of the criteria for appointment, information about the expected number and location of vacancies and further information for applicants, is available on or after 6 January 1999 by telephoning 0171 210 1464 (an answering machine will operate outside normal office hours) or by writing to:

Applications Unit  
(Judicial Appointments Division 2)  
Lord Chancellor's Department  
Selborne House  
54/56 Victoria Street  
LONDON SW1E 6QW

When calling or writing, please indicate whether you are interested in appointment (a) as a Deputy District Judge; OR (b) as a Deputy District Judge of the Principal Registry of the Family Division; OR both. Applicants are requested to leave a telephone number where they can be contacted should their details require clarification.

Completed application forms must be returned by noon on Friday 5 February 1999.

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## Dancing debate continues in print

THE beauty and elegance of dance sport rivals that of any other, but for the past two decades it has been a relatively closed and isolated world. For an activity that is so photogenic and involves so many beautiful and fit young men and women, the available literature on dance sport has been shockingly sparse. Olympic recognition and a television deal with International Management Group (IMG), however, are forcing change. *The Best of Dancesport 1998* reflects this change.

A superb collection of colour photographs of champions, finalists and those involved behind the scenes at 11 of the main world events this year, the book has been masterminded by Andrew Sinkinson, the British champion, who comes from South London and is a noted exponent of the foxtrot. Specialist dance photographers, including Karen Moos, of Germany, have contributed, with text by professional dancers including Anne Lewis and Bill Irvine.

Bo Loft-Jensen, a former world professional ten-dance champion, writes of the two talking points in January's UK championship in Bourne-mouth. The first question concerned whether the leading Italian couple, Augusto Schiavo and Caterina Arzenito, could maintain their position after a nine-month lay-off because of injury.

Second, there was lively discussion about the dress of Sinkinson, dancing with Charlotte Jorgensen for England. In the early rounds, he discarded his traditional tail suit in favour of a white shirt

### DANCE SPORT

by Ruth Gledhill

and black waistcoat, while his partner wore a simple, black cocktail dress. "This is a debate that is in fact still going on, with people discussing the pros and cons of less formal wear, in relation to the general public's view of dancesport," Jensen writes.

Most of the pictures show couples in traditional dress, whether for the five "standard" dances — waltz, foxtrot, tango, quickstep and Viennese waltz — or their Latin American counterparts. The dancers are captured in the kind of explosive action shots rarely seen on *Come Dancing*, exhibiting the suppleness of Olympic gymnasts along with a muscular fitness more commonly associated with stars of track and field.

John and Arlene Leach, of *Dance News*, describe the "determined, yet almost ruthless" performance of Marcus and Karen Hilton, of England, as they set about winning their seventh Open British title at Blackpool last May.

The book is being published in four languages — Japanese, German, English and Italian — and 7,000 advance orders have already been received in Japan, where dancesport is bordering on a national obsession.

Other dance books published this year include *Salsa & Merengue*, a step-by-step guide to the dance that is captivating the cast of *The Archers*, as well as thousands of young dancers throughout Britain. Paul Harris, a leading London dance teacher and choreographer, traces the origin of the latest Latin American dances to hit the club scene.

□ *The Best of Dancesport 1998*, by Andrew Sinkinson (Bauhaus Co Ltd, £45).

□ *Salsa & Merengue*, by Paul Harris (Sigma Leisure, £6.95).

□ *The Best of Dancesport 1998* (ChrisAnne, £45).

## Read all about it: Times writers conclude their review of the best of 1998



All smiles: Ian Wright shows his affection for Adams as Arsenal celebrate their title success, but the situation had serious undertones for the club captain. Photograph: Marc Aspland

## Adams tops table with brutal honesty

by Nick Szczepanik

There has never been a wider selection of books about football, with entire forests, one imagines, swept away in order to produce the 1998 crop of club histories, player profiles and reference tomes. Even so, two publications hogged the headlines.

Of the two, Glenn Hoddle's *World Cup Story* is of more curiosity value than literary merit, but the same could not be said of the summer's other blockbuster, *Admitted*, by Tony Adams. The Arsenal captain, with Ian Ridley, his collaborator, who also co-wrote 1997's excellent *Tales From The Boot Camps*, has produced an account of a career nearly destroyed by alcoholism that is so honest as to be uncomfortable. Not then, a little light reading for Christmas, but certainly the out-

standing football book of the year.

Bobby Robson, Vinnie Jones and Teddy Sheringham are among big names who have had stories worth telling, but compared to the colourful memoirs of Ron Atkinson in *Big Ron*, they pale. After all, Atkinson has worked for Doug Ellis and Jesus Gil and lived to tell the tales.

A respected football writer once opined — in these pages — that women could not properly report the game because they had not played it. Well, Alison Rudd may not have performed at the same exalted standard as the gentleman in question, but in *Astroturf Blonde*, she captures the love of the game as it is played away from the so-called glamour of internationals and premier leagues, and which most footballers, of either gender,

will recognise. Needless to say, reference books have abounded, but with new grounds, and existing stadiums altering almost beyond recognition, an updated version of the *Football Fans' Guide* is especially welcome. For anyone on their first visit to Manchester United or Mansfield Town, this is the best directory of how to get there, where to eat and drink before the game, and which club's away totems to avoid if possible.

There was also the little matter of a World Cup this year, with France '98 previews and retrospectives choking the shelves.

Bearing in mind England's eventual fate, *He Always Puts It To The Right*, by the late Clark Miller, is a timely and

entertaining consideration of the history and psychology of the eternal nemesis of the England team, the penalty shoot-out, but in *One Love*, journalist Daniel Davies and player Robbie Earle tell the story of how a debt-ridden, disorganised national team was transformed into the colourful and dynamic Reggae Boys, who unified a country and captured the imagination before rows over bonuses and team selection threatened to ruin everything.

Brazil disappointed in the final, but two books may banish the bad memories. *Brasil Bom De Bola* is a collection of

essays about the roots of the beautiful game on the beaches, streets and even in the rain forests of Brazil, in words, but more impressively, photographs — the one-legged ball-juggler who provides pre-match entertainment at the Maracana, the pitch with a palm tree in one corner of the penalty area, and any number of other memorable images are accompanied by words in Portuguese, French and English from playwrights, novelists, poets and songwriters, with all profits going to help Brazilian street children.

*The Beautiful Team* sets out to find the men of the 1970 World Cup-winning side, arguably the greatest team in history, from Felix to Rivelino (yes, we had been misspelling his name for 28 years). Read it and blot out the recollection of their suc-

cessors' abject capitulation at the Stade de France.

□ *Admitted*, by Tony Adams with Ian Ridley (Collins-Willow, £16.99).

□ *Big Ron*, by Ron Atkinson with Ian Ridley (Collins-Willow, £16.99).

□ *Astroturf Blonde*, by Alison Rudd (Headline, £14.99).

□ *Football Fans' Guide*, by Janet Williams (Collins-Willow, £9.99).

□ *He Always Puts It To The Right*, by Clark Miller (Headline, £14.99).

□ *One Love*, by Robbie Earle and Daniel Davies (Andre Deutsch, £14.99).

□ *Brasil Bom De Bola* (distributed by Art Books International, £33).

□ *The Beautiful Team — In Search of Pelé and the 1970 Brazilians*, by Garry Jenkins (Simon & Schuster, £15.99).

## Pedal-power wins the day Scaling peaks and valleys

by Peter Bryan

FIFTY-SIX years ago road-racing in Britain was either on a helter-skelter course to disaster or a stormy ride to success, depending on one's point of view, in a row that was to divide cycle racing for 16 years. Fortunately, success was the outcome, a triumph for the Davids of the sport over the Goliaths.

Road-racing had been banned since the turn of the century, not by an act of Parliament but by the National Cyclists' Union (NCU), fearful of police interference. The union, the country's only organisation with international recognition, reckoned without its outstanding prewar rider who had experienced racing *en ligne* in world championships on the continent.

Percy Stallard decided in 1942 that Britain's wartime roads — little used by civilian traffic because of petrol rationing — provided an ideal opportunity to break the mould.

On June 7, 1942, he organ-

ised the first road-race on public highways between Llangollen and his home town of Wolverhampton — with the constables of Denbighshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire and Wolverhampton. (It was advisable, indicated the race programme, "for competitors to carry their identity cards.")

Chas Messenger recalls the trials and tribulations that followed for Stallard's new organisation, the British League of Racing Cyclists (BLRC), in *Ride and Be Damned*. It is a story of intrigue, humour and bitterness that lasted until the NCU offered the BLRC terms in 1968 that led to the amalgamation of the two bodies.

Stallard and his supporters had never given up the fight to re-establish Britain's role in road racing, dating back to

1869 when James Moore, then a veterinary surgeon in Paris, won the world's first road-race between Paris and Rouen.

The early days of the rebel BLRC spawned the first Brighton to Glasgow stage race in 1945, followed by the Tour of Britain, which in 1959 became the Milk Race, of which Messenger was later organiser for eight years.

The book he has produced is not all politics; there is ample coverage of British riders' successes at home and abroad and a wealth of action photographs. Messenger provides an absorbing history of the most turbulent period of British cycling, made all the more interesting by Ivan Dodds's contribution as its designer.

If the book is lacking anything, however, it is a postscript on Stallard who, now 89 years and finding it difficult to walk, is still prepared to offer his views on cycling's deficiencies then and now.

□ *Ride and Be Damned*, by Chas Messenger (Pedal Publishing, £24.95).

FOR a sport in a constant state of flux and with eyes firmly fixed on the future, rugby league's rich, class-driven past tends to be overlooked in its obsessive pioneering. A pity, because history has a way of catching up with the present.

Take Gateshead, where the tempests of the Super League will reach with a new team next year, but where another venture foundered in the Thirties after two seasons.

This year's literary outpourings are dominated again by the lustre of bygone days, pre-summer and Super League. The pick is *Rugby's Great Split*, by Tony Collins, the Rugby Football League archivist, who asks why there are two forms of rugby, and ends up with a celebration of the game's traditions and passions in answering that rugby's schism in 1895 actually defined the class barriers.

Rugby league was shaped in the spirit of defiance and Collins, successfully treading between social history lessons and good storytelling, lends

weight to a truth not universally acknowledged: that little has changed in a century when the game remains wedded to an expansionist theory that has never quite succeeded.

Collins concludes that working-class alienation, persecution by rugby union authorities and geographic restriction moulded the formation of the Northern Union. In that light, was the battle for rugby's soul won by 1895 ever really won? In terms of establishing itself in Wales, the answer, overwhelmingly, is no.

*Tries in the Valleys* pre-empted the recent decision by Cardiff and Swansea to withdraw bids for Super League franchises in 1999, but that makes the book more relevant. It opens up with a so-called 20th-century Welsh proverb:

by Christopher Irvine

"There are three things not discussed in polite society — politics, religion, and rugby league." Peter Lush and Dave Farrar argue that it is not the game itself that has failed in Wales, but the failure of league people in the North to transplant it.

The Challenge Cup remains the most alluring prize in the game and an illustrated history by Les Hoole does it decent justice with a detailed year-by-year account of the 97 finals. Hoole has also collaborated with Phil Caplan in compiling an excellent vicarious account of 103 years of the Leeds club.

□ *Rugby's Great Split*, by Tony Collins (Frank Cass, £16.50).

□ *Tries in the Valleys*, edited by Peter Lush and Dave Farrar (London League Publications, £14.95).

□ *The Rugby League Challenge Cup*, by Les Hoole (Breedon, £14.99).

□ *Images of England, Leeds Rugby League Club*, compiled by Phil Caplan and Les Hoole (Tempus, £9.99).

## Fear and fulfilment on the high seas

PETE GOSS feared writing a book about his Vendée Globe campaign in *Aqua Quorum* more than the actual business of racing round the world. Indeed he spoke about it with real dread before he settled down to his task. Yet in *Close To The Wind*, Goss has produced a fluent, amusing and honest book about his action-packed life to date that is hard to put down.

The narrative rambles along — episodic and all — a cracking pace. His early sailing exploits were tinged with desperation as he sought to establish himself, and he was prepared to break the rules if he got ahead. At the start of a single-handed transatlantic race, Goss did not have the money for a radio. In order to pass a pre-start inspection wired up a backlight on broken set to convince officials he had what was required.

After skippingper *Hofor Lager* in Sir Chay Blyth's first round-the-world race for amateurs, Goss eventually realised his dream of racing single-handed around the world.

by Edward Gornh

book comes into its own as it gets down to the trials and tribulations of the *Aqua Quorum* campaign and with the rescue of Raphael Dinelli in the Southern Ocean as its climax, it is a gripping tale.

If you are looking for a memento of this year's Whitbread Round the World Race, *Risk To Gain*, with words by Mark Chisnell, Magni Olsson and Anna Drougou and pictures by Rick Tomlinson, is a worthy offering.

The story of Maurice and Marilyn Bailey and how they clung to life for 117 days in the Pacific in 1973 after their yacht sank is one of the greatest sea survival. The Baileys' account, re-released under the original title, *117 Days Afloat*, is a tale of determination and ingenuity in the face of overwhelming odds.

□ *Close To The Wind*, by Pete Goss (Headline, £8.99).

□ *Risk To Gain*, by Mark Chisnell and Rick Tomlinson (Max Strom Publishing, £29.95).

□ *117 Days Afloat*, by Maurice and Marilyn Bailey (Lizard Coles Nautical, £9.99).

## Ice-cold tales and statistics

ICE hockey devotees have rarely been so well served for reading matter as they are this Christmas. As usual, there is *The Ice Hockey Annual*, now in its 23rd year. It is always bringing in its coverage of the British game with complete statistics of all domestic competitions as well as a detailed review of the year. The only drawback is that there are too many statistical information about individual players.

This data can be found in *Ice Cold Facts*, published by the Superleague. Its layout is untidy, however, and there are some glaring errors.

Liam Slattery is a comprative newcomer to ice hockey but has quickly become a fan favourite and has written two books. The first, *Seasons To Be Cheerful*, written two years ago, chronicled the development of the British game *A Game of Three Halves*, sold

by Norman de Mesquita

## Rare vintage from South Africa provides potent account

FOR all that England ended the international year with an historic win over South Africa, the southern hemisphere takes the honours in literature as well as playing terms. Ever since Dave Gallaher and Billy Stead came out with their magnum opus more than 90 years ago, we have been accustomed to New Zealand's quality output, but it is rare for South Africans to join them.

This year, however, Donald McRae paints his *Winter Colours* alongside Robin McConnell's *Inside the All Blacks* and David Kirk's *Black and Blue*. McRae grew up in apartheid South Africa, became an angry young man at university and left his native country in 1984 to live in England — yet nowhere does he attempt to disguise his love of rugby and passion for the green shirt of the national

team in a work that stands head and shoulders above any rival.

It has been McRae's achievement to strike up a rich relationship with outstanding players of the era, with James Small from his own country, with Josh Kronfeld from New Zealand, but also to put the personalities within the wider context not only of the sport but society.

McRae does not make the mistake of ignoring rugby's backdrop, of crime and violence in South Africa, of economic downturn in New Zealand, of the strains that impact on Northern Ireland, and does not overplay his hand in the same way as McConnell.

The biographer of Michael Jones is also an academic at Massey University who spent three years on the trail of the All Blacks, at home and abroad, winning the confidence of

two notorious sceptics — Laurie Mains and Sean Fitzpatrick.

In similar circumstances, we might all become a bit too pally and since one of McConnell's favoured literary devices is the direct conversation, the reader is overwhelmed with nicknames and personal confidences where a certain reserve might help the narrative. For all that, it is a remarkable tale of the reconstruction of a winning team. He does accuse the New Zealand Rugby Football Union of being reactive to the problems created by professionalism which, were he to have sampled the effect of so fundamental a change on the northern hemisphere, he might have been slower to do. But his caution-

ary words include quoting from a response by one All Black, which should be a mantra for all young players.

by David Hands

ers: "I wish I had carried on with my studies and would now jump at the chance of further education." His respondent wrote: "I'm lucky to have rugby, I didn't realise then how much I would need education and how much I miss it. I wonder how many others there are?"

Kirk, the first to hold aloft the Webb Ellis Cup in triumph, was always going to write an interesting autobiography. It loses its way, though, in covering the past ten years: not that Kirk, the former scrum half and All Blacks captain, was playing throughout that period, but one as perceptive and intelli-

gent could have written more on the transition to professionalism.

An honourable mention, too, for *A Season in Stripes*, by Michael Tanner, who recorded life with Leicester during 1997-98. This is not a case of parochialism run wild but the chance to do, at club level, what McConnell did with a national team: Tanner, a former scrum half in Leicester during the 1970s, covers in informative manner the period when Leicester and Bob Dwyer fell out, his sympathies quite clearly with the Australian coach.

Yet Leicester remains one of the few first-division clubs that continues to make its own way financially, for that alone, they deserve study by their peers.

□ *Winter Colours*, by Donald McRae (Mainstream Publishing, £16.99).

□ *Inside the All Blacks*, by Robin McConnell (HarperCollins, £16.99).

□ *Black & Blue*, by David Kirk (Hodder Moa Beckett, £21.95).

□ *A Season in Stripes*, by Michael Tanner (Mainstream Publishing, £15.99).

□ *Lions of Wales*, by Peter Jackson (Mainstream Publishing, £14.99).

□ *Will Carling — My Autobiography*, by Will Carling with Paul Ackford (Hodder & Stoughton, £17.99).

□ *Life at Number Ten*, by Neil Jenkins with Paul Rees (Mainstream Publishing, £14.99).

□ *Rugby Rebel*, by Alan Tait with Bill Lottman (Mainstream Publishing, £14.99).

□ *Passion in Exile — 100 years of London Irish*, by Peter Bills (Mainstream Publishing, £20).

ded *British Ice Hockey's Changing World*, details the arrival of the Superleague and the domination of the game here by foreign players.

*Total Hockey* is described as 'The Official Encyclopedia of the National Hockey League, a description that does not begin to tell the story because this is the reference book that outstrips all previous attempts to tell the story of any sport.'

□ *The Ice Hockey Annual* (published by Stewart Roberts, £9.95).

□ *Ice Cold Facts* (published by the Superleague, £14.95).

□ *A Game of Three Halves: British Ice Hockey's Changing World*, by Liam Slattery (Mainstream, £14.99).

□ *Total Hockey*, edited by Dan Diamond (published by the US by Total Sport, \$49.95).



Richard Evans asks trainers for their holiday bankers
Spendid primed to help offset cost of Christmas

In an attempt to defray Christmas expenses, Britain's leading trainers yesterday gave punters a clue as to their best chances of sending out a winner over the festive season.



Sihafi and Soaked failed in their attempts to register a 20th Century record of ten handicap wins in a Flat season in the 49's Handicap at Lingfield Park yesterday.

David Nicholson invariably fields a strong team for Boxing Day when Spendid will go for the Feltham Novices' Chase at Kempton. 'He's a tough, consistent horse who has raced in the top bracket for the last two years.

of more than £40 to a national £1 stake, and Explain This has been kept for a race at Chesham next Monday. He is also looking for a big run from Lashah in the opener at Kempton on Boxing Day.

Richard Lee is enjoying a cracking season and there is considerable stable confidence behind Macegeorge in the Welsh National at Chesham on Monday - ground permitting.

far for him. He's in fine form." Richard Lee is enjoying a cracking season and there is considerable stable confidence behind Macegeorge in the Welsh National at Chesham on Monday - ground permitting.

RACING AHEAD
Robert Wright suggests the best value in the ante-post market

Table with columns for race names, horses, and odds. Includes races like '1.14 Love Diamond' and '1.15 Jemaroo'.

WITH these blank racing days from tomorrow, today offers the last chance to place an ante-post bet on Saturday's Perampal King George VI Chase at Kempton Park.

After his best Flat season, Karl Burke moved to Newmarket last month from where he is already sending out winners.

After his best Flat season, Karl Burke moved to Newmarket last month from where he is already sending out winners.

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

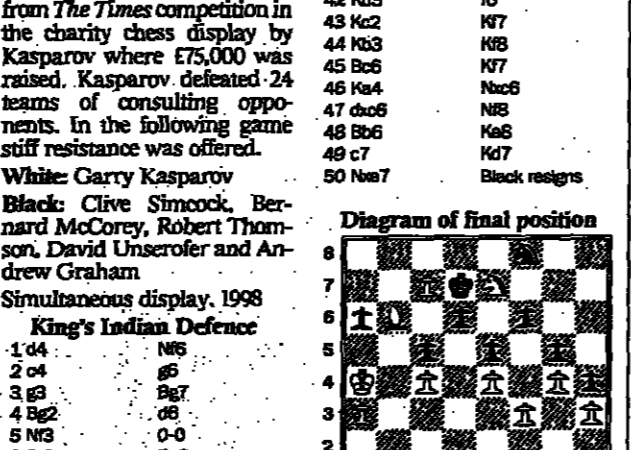
By ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT
Giving declarer a ruff-and-discard is a crime often rated on a par with spilling a full cup of coffee across the green baize.

Bridge hand diagram showing cards in each hand (North, South, West, East) and the play sequence.

Two Clubs in the Precision system shows a minimum opening bid with long clubs. Three Clubs was pre-emptive, and North-South manoeuvred themselves into a Four Spades with the aid of two take-out doubles and a cue-bid.

KEENE on CHESS

By RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT
Kasparov's display
Today I give the second game played by a team of qualifiers from The Times competition in the charity chess display by Kasparov where £75,000 was raised.



Keene online
You can send me your queries, puzzles, problems and games direct by e-mail. The address is keenechess@aol.com.

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene
White to play. This position is from the game Spraggett - Speelman, Hastings Premier 1989.

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard
SERAB
a. Abaddon's companion
b. A mirage
c. An antelope

SOUTHWELL

THUNDERER
12.00 Casheplenty, 12.30 Intash, 1.00 Love Diamonds, 1.30 Mella, 2.00 Dalwhinnie, 2.30 Malicemia, 3.00 Socializer, 3.30 Mutabassir.

12.00 PARIS HANDICAP
(Div 1: £1,861: 1m 40) (10 runners)

- 1 (4) 000 PETER CHANCE 75 (D.F.G.S.) M Began 6-10-0 ...
2 (1) 4462 JOHNNE THE JOKER 21 (B.C.G.) J. J. ...

12.30 COPENHAGEN CLAIMING STAKES
(Div 1: £1,861: 50) (9 runners)

- 1 (8) 5800 DANDE TIMES 11 (B.C.G.) A Hoy 3-8-13 ...
2 (1) 2111 LTON LEEGER 4 (D.F.G.S.) M Began 6-12-3 ...

1.00 COLOGNE NURSERY HANDICAP
(2-Y-O: £2,843: 1m) (12 runners)

- 1 (2) 055 CUPROARD LOR 12 (D.F.G.S.) M Began 6-7-5 ...
2 (1) 0003 THUNDER DANCER 77 (D.F.G.S.) A. ...

1.30 COPENHAGEN CLAIMING STAKES
(Div 1: £1,861: 50) (9 runners)

- 1 (2) 001 HEARTS ABLE 22 (D.F.G.S.) M Began 3-13 ...
2 (1) 0051 MALLA 20 (D.F.G.S.) M Began 5-13 ...

1.45 BRIGGS TURN (nap)
3.45 Travelling Man

Timekeeper's top rating: 12.45 JUST GOOD FUN.

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (GOOD IN PLACES) TOTE JACKPOT MEETING SIS

LUDLOW

THUNDERER
12.45 Basman 2.15 Symbol Of Success
1.15 Jemaroo 2.45 Tempestuous Lady
1.45 BRIGGS TURN (nap) 3.45 Travelling Man

Timekeeper's top rating: 12.45 JUST GOOD FUN.

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (GOOD IN PLACES) TOTE JACKPOT MEETING SIS

12.45 TANNERS CLARET NOVICES HURDLE

- 101 BASMAN 45F (Wales, 5yo) ...
102 LAMBERT 51F (Wales, 5yo) ...

JUST GOOD FUN, unlikely to find one too good to be true.

1.15 TANNERS BURSUDY HANDICAP CHASE

- 101 RP-060 DAMAS 6 (D.F.G.S.) F. ...
102 STAMBOURNE 45 (D.F.G.S.) M. ...

JEMAROO, too long in time when starting and too late.

1.45 TANNERS CAVA HANDICAP HURDLE

- 101 34-221 MARSHLAND 10 (D.F.G.S.) F. ...
102 02-2022 FINE WINDMILL 10 (D.F.G.S.) M. ...

BRIGGS TURN, too long in time when starting and too late.

2.00 PARIS HANDICAP

- 1 (4) 3564 NITRA'S STAR 6 (D.F.G.S.) M Began 5-9-10 ...
2 (2) 0100 PLEASANT DREAMS 78 (F.S.) D. ...

1.14 London, 2-2 Golden Lyric, 3-1 Ezeiza Star, 4-1 Spina, 5-1 Puccini, 6-1 Puccini, 7-1 Puccini, 8-1 Puccini, 9-1 Puccini, 10-1 Puccini, 11-1 Puccini, 12-1 Puccini.

2.30 49'S HANDICAP (SHOWCASE RACE AND TOTE TRIFESTA RACE) (£7,133: 7) (16 runners)

- 1 (7) 3702 ITALIAN SYMPHONY 3 (M.D.) P. ...
2 (14) 8021 THESEUSLE 11 (D.F.G.S.) M Began 5-9-11 ...

1.14 London, 2-2 Golden Lyric, 3-1 Ezeiza Star, 4-1 Spina, 5-1 Puccini, 6-1 Puccini, 7-1 Puccini, 8-1 Puccini, 9-1 Puccini, 10-1 Puccini, 11-1 Puccini, 12-1 Puccini.

3.00 BARCELONA SELLING STAKES

- 1 (116) 0260 LEGAL VENTURE 4 (D.F.G.S.) M Began 9-3-8 ...
2 (7) 0261 GRASSLAND 4 (D.F.G.S.) M Began 9-3-8 ...

1.14 London, 2-2 Golden Lyric, 3-1 Ezeiza Star, 4-1 Spina, 5-1 Puccini, 6-1 Puccini, 7-1 Puccini, 8-1 Puccini, 9-1 Puccini, 10-1 Puccini, 11-1 Puccini, 12-1 Puccini.

3.30 ABBROKE ALL-WEATHER CHALLENGE SERIES HANDICAP (Qualifier: £2,899: 50) (15 runners)

- 1 (115) 8033 OREN 21 (D.F.G.S.) M Began 4-10-9 ...
2 (116) 8034 OREN 21 (D.F.G.S.) M Began 4-10-9 ...

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Ludlow: 1.15 Stammore, 2.15 Perryton, Southwell: 3.00 Grange Park, Legal Venture: Keen Harvis

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Lingfield Park

Going: Standard
1.14 (1m 20) 1. ELHABUS (P. Frederick) ...
2.14 (1m 20) 2. ELHABUS (P. Frederick) ...

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: PERRYMAN (2.15 Ludlow)
Perryman was pipped by Knight's Crest, a winner since, over course and can initiate a chasing double for Kim Bailey.

Nb: Supreme Charm (3.15 Ludlow)

2.40 (5) 1. PRIMO LARA (P. Roberts) ...
2.40 (5) 2. ZIGGY'S DREAMER (J. Quinn) ...

2.15 TANNERS WINES HANDICAP CHASE (£3,810: 3m) (10 runners)

- 401 129-F CLASS OF TWENTY 33 (D.F.G.S.) ...
402 3-2225 SPRING GALE 26 (F.S.) ...

1997 FORTUNES COURSE 8-11-0 W. ...

2.45 HEDDST RUISSSEL PANACUR EBF MARES NH NOVICES HURDLE (£3,599: 2m 5f 110yd) (11 runners)

- 501 116-F TEMPESTUOUS LADY 13 (D.F.G.S.) ...
502 117-F ALL-ROUNDER 6 (D.F.G.S.) ...

1997 DONNA 6-10-12 M. ...

3.15 TANNERS CHAMPAGNE NOVICES CHASE (£3,581: 2m) (8 runners)

- 601 12-0-12 FERRUGINO 12 (D.F.G.S.) ...
602 32-0-2225 NORTH WIND 11 (D.F.G.S.) ...

1997 GALE TON 8-11-0 A. ...

3.45 LUDLOW CHRISTMAS PARTY NATIONAL HUNT FLAT (£1,319: 2m) (10 runners)

- 1 0 BALMORAL SPRING 24 (D.F.G.S.) ...
2 0 BARTON HILL 23 (D.F.G.S.) ...

1997 NO CORRESPONDING RACE

SPECIALISTS

SOUTHWELL: Trainers: W. Hoag, 7 winners from 33 runners, 21.2% ...

RACELINE

Advertisement for RACELINE with phone number 09066 1684 and website URL.

Table of COURSE SPECIALISTS showing wins and percentages for various trainers and jockeys.



Three prize men: Arsenal's goalscoring trio celebrate during Sunday's win over Leeds. Bergkamp was this week's leading fantasy scorer. Photograph: Alastair Grant/AP

# Champagne and prizes for a fantasy Christmas season

**T**oday we announce the first ON-Target prize winners, opposite. ON-Target, a new competition, for which all Times Fantasy League teams are automatically entered, is an extra way of winning prizes (including cash, sports equipment and games software) in addition to the main, monthly and weekly prizes.

Playing the game is simplicity itself. If your team's points total matches the number or numbers in that week's ON-Target box, you have qualified to enter a draw which could win you £500 cash plus an EA Sports Pack containing, among other items, the videogame FIFA 99 for Playstation or PC.

In other words, if your total team score, according to the player lists printed opposite, comes to either 3 or 14, you should read the instructions on the facing page to find out what to do next.

This extra competition means that you could be a prize winner even if the players in your team have had a disastrous weekend. For example, even if eight of your players spent 90 minutes on the bench and your goalkeeper, Peter Schmeichel, for example, scored minus two, then five points from, say, Robbie Fowler and Trevor Sinclair would give you an overall score of three, keeping you in with a chance of a prize.

In contrast to last week, the Fantasy League week just ended featured few outstanding performances. Dennis Bergkamp of Arsenal was the top points-scorer with seven (three of those by courtesy of a goal scored from a touch by a suspiciously offside-looking Nicolas Anelka).



trip to The Dell for a fixture that might have looked straightforward until Southampton saw off Wimbledon with relative ease over the weekend; now, Gianluca Vialli's men may be content with a draw. Elsewhere, Arsenal host West Ham, who have won on three of their last six visits, while Villa go to Blackburn, where they have won only once in the last 11 matches. Last season, Rovers put nine past Villa without reply in their two meetings.

Fantasy League pages will be appearing as usual on Tuesdays throughout the holiday period, to keep you in touch with the progress of your teams.

Make sure you pay special attention to this week's Fantasy

Quiz. In an unprecedented burst of seasonal generosity and festive spirit, we are offering a prize of a magnum of champagne to the winner, and three runner-up prizes of copies of *The Spirit of Football*, a collection of football photographs.

Next week, we will publish player lists updated to include all games played on Boxing Day, but not those played on December 28 (Bank Holiday Monday). New lists affected by the results of games on December 28 and 29, and the name of the winner of the monthly prize for December, will appear the following week, on Tuesday January 5; new ON-Target numbers and a new weekly winner will be announced on both December 29 and January 5.

## As I was saying

The holiday spirit is building up nicely. Absolutely, I'm looking forward to unwrapping those Newcastle socks you were planning to get me. They'll keep me nice and warm for a spot of football watching on Boxing Day. I might surprise you by getting you something different.

Well, I have to tell you that I will be perhaps the only person in the country who will be disappointed if he doesn't get socks. But feel free to get me anything extra.

I'll consider it if you can come up with the answer to a problem that's been bothering me. I wanted to inject a seasonal gift theme into my new team.

That could work. Any other ideas? Well, the Arsenal players probably got gold-coloured medals for the Championship, or the FA Cup. You could have Nigel Winterburn or Lee Dixon. Chelsea won the League Cup as well, so there's Celestine Babayaro or Graham Le Saux. I'm afraid not. I really wanted Babayaro because, if my memory doesn't fail me, he was in the Nigeria team that won the gold medal in the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta. The only problem is that I can't have two Chelsea players in the same team.



### CHOOSE YOUR PLAYERS FROM HERE

Table listing player statistics including columns for code, name, club, weekly points, total points, and value. Includes sections for GOALKEEPERS, FULL BACKS, CENTRE BACKS, and FORWARDS.

### HOW TO ENTER YOUR FANTASY LEAGUE TEAM

Select a team of 11 Premiership players from those listed right. The total value of your team must not exceed £50m and you cannot choose more than one player from the same Premiership club. Your team must be in a 4-4-2 formation with: one goalkeeper; two full-backs; two centre-backs; four midfielders; and two forwards.

THE TIMES MAIN FANTASY LEAGUE ENTRY FORM. Includes fields for team name, player selection grid, personal details, and payment information.

FANTASY LEAGUE SERVICES. Includes contact information for Checkline (0640 625 102), Transfer Line (0640 625 103), Faxback (0991 123 720), Super League Faxback (0991 123 721), and Helpline (01582 702720).

First £500 for... (Advertisement for a promotion or contest.)

# Stig Inge in best form of defence

A low-scoring week but more prizes than ever because we can announce the first winners of the new ON-Target competition

**W**ith two midweek FA Cup Premier League games played, Fantasy League entrants whose teams included players from Chelsea, Coventry City, Leeds United or Manchester United were probably rubbing their hands, if not actually licking their lips, at the prospect of a bumper haul of points. After all, two games had given Benito Carbone an outstanding 13 points the week before, so why not?

Unfortunately, it did not work out quite as hoped. Nicky Butt profited in both games, gaining an assist by hitting a shot against Andy Cole, who turned to score, on Wednesday, and leading the first of two consolation goals on Saturday, but there were no instances of players sparking in both games. In fact, in terms of Fantasy League points, Noel Blake of Blackburn, and Egil Ostenstad of Southampton, both of whom scored twice on Saturday, did better in a single game than anyone managed in two.

In hindsight, perhaps it would have been expected too much for teams such as Chelsea or Manchester United to come up with high-scoring individual performances, given the tight nature of the championship race. It may not be a coincidence that the race for the glittering Fantasy League prizes also seems to be getting tighter all the time.

A week ago, two entrants managed the same number of points, with the prize of £500 plus £100-worth of sports equipment decided on the number of places jumped. This week, the decision was even closer, with three contestants racking up 26 points.

The winner, whose team, The Ekuban Family, rocketed 47,659 places, is Henry Ekuban, of North London.

There was no contribution to equal that of Benito Carbone to last week's winning squad; Dennis Bergkamp was the winning team's highest scorer with seven points thanks to a goal and two assists in Arsenal's 3-1 victory over Leeds on Sunday. Andy Cole weighed in with five more points, following his goal against Chelsea in midweek, with an assist in his team's surprise home defeat by Middlesbrough.

Perhaps the most surprising major contributor to Mr Ekuban's success was Stig Inge Bjornebye, the Liverpool wing-back who, along with most of his colleagues in the Reds' defence, has come in for considerable criticism this season. On Saturday, however, he was part of a back division that kept out Sheffield Wednesday, Carbone and all, and he also produced the cross from which Michael Owen scored, earning an assist.

The state of the Liverpool defence these days is, of course, a regular topic in many circles, from expert pun-



The Ekuban Family

E Sp-Booy (CHE)	3
L Oshoret (NEW)	3
S I Bjornebye (LIV)	5
M Elliott (LEI)	0
D Withersall (LEI)	-1
M Dwyer (AST)	-1
M Bergkamp (ARS)	-2
S Lomas (SOU)	-2
S Payne (SOX)	-2
A Cole (MAN)	-5
S Bergkamp (ARS)	-7

Total points: 26

dits on television panels to less expert but equally opinionated punters in the pubs. Whatever happened, they ask, to the days of Alan Hansen and Mark Lawrenson, with Ray Clemence behind them?

Current players are bound to suffer by comparison to such Arsenal legends, and the point is seldom made that interpretations of the laws affecting defenders, especially the offside law, are rather different these days, and even those past masters might struggle at times.

Bjornebye is one of those most heavily criticised for supposedly falling short of previous standards, but you suspect that if he were not playing for a team whose defenders are under the minutest of scrutiny, his qualities would be noted more often. His crossing of the ball is a useful weapon in the attacking armoury of Liverpool and Norway, for whom he started all four games in the 1998 World Cup, including the victory over Brazil. He has also demonstrated the versatility required of the modern player; best known as an attacking left-back, he appeared on the right on Saturday, and he also strikes a dead ball with the best of them — corner-kicks a speciality. And this week, he is the top Fantasy League defender.

## FANTASY PLAYER OF THE WEEK



'Anfield' Stigma: as a Liverpool defender, Stig Inge Bjornebye is a target for snipers from all levels of punditry. More than 60 caps for Norway tell a different story, and a clean sheet and the assist for Michael Owen's goal on Saturday (worth five points) make him the week's top Fantasy League defender.

## FANTASY LEAGUE TOP 100

1	Paul Clarke	Sheffal United	217
2	Tony Murnaghan	Tony's Terrors	200
3	Sean Eastwood	Coen Brothers	198
4	Robert Anderson	Robert's Rovers	198
5	Michael Langdon	Hermaphrodites	198
6	Sean Morgan	Oh No! Again Ref	197
7	Terry Butler	Don Don Don	197
8	David Young	Don's Dreams FC	197
9	Terry Butler	El Ter's Revenge	197
10	David Mann	In The City	197
11	John White	Fussager	197
12	David Young	Don's Dreams	197
13	I. Samuels	Sparak Mossley	197
14	Thomas Maudslayi	It's All Stars	197
15	Markie Wilson	Grampus Gunners	197
16	James Walsh	Niger's Army	197
17	Paul Taylor	Pin-Ups 7	197
18	John Flanagan	We Hate Beckham	197
19	Richard Deane	On The Wagon	197
20	Stephen Marshall	Dootheekway	197
21	Steve Ogarfi	Lokomobu No Go	197
22	Nigel Kelly	Kalms Kings 8	197
23	Richard Deane	The Prime Cuts	197
24	David Parry	YeahYeahYeahYeah	197
25	Roy Walker	Blue & Black Bar	197
26	Don S. O'Connell	Robins Raiders	197
27	Robbie Pringle	Robbie's Rovers	197
28	David Walker	Just A Second FC	197
29	Robert Little	Broken Arrow	197
30	Oliver Chappell	Wigston Rangers	197
31	Scott Brett	Scotts Stars	197
32	Reda Maber	Picadassels	197
33	Wesley Lawson	Throw In Muses	197
34	Steve Broadhurst	Niger's Army	197
35	David Edmondson	Edmo Ltd Mington	197
36	Jonathan Bewick	Buzzon's Boys	197
37	Paulie Morris	Skull Vank	197
38	Nicholas Knightley	These Eat Beans	197
39	William Mann	Lepetovermors	197
40	John Loftus	Solid At The Box	197
41	Peter Densley	Soak A UK	197
42	Louise Purdy	Lou's Rockets	197
43	Andrew Harkin	Eat My Goal	197
44	Nicholas Langford	Graincorp	197
45	Richard Verdon	Pomo Pick	197
46	Oscar Smith	Corazon FC 5	197
47	David Parry	Middlebushes	197
48	Michael Lyne	Alloolooohoo	197
49	D Osborne	George F C	197
50	Ian Dunning	Univ De Dunning	197
51	Gordon Crutchley	Super Snipers 8	197
52	Warry Woodford	Mummy's Movers	197
53	Mike Shipley	Minus Threat 10	197
54	E Scaletta	Gato Nero	197
55	Pauline Faggarth	Thumpthump	197
56	The Garden	Heart Of Glass	197
57	Rue Allport	Cyclones	197
58	James Ingle	Prize O The Rock	197
59	John Hall	Melton United	197
60	John Hill	Stogton Dudes	197
61	Darren Braumigan	Monday Moaners	197
62	Wesley Lawson	Yebocanstror	197
63	Alan Westrop	Tyrade Army 94	197
64	James McInnes	No I Need Ower	197
65	Dorothy Robinson	Globerina	197
66	Cheryl Archer	Grey Arrows	197
67	Michael Lyne	Sinnemaster	197
68	Tony Gammage	Narrac Two	197
69	Paul Dallimore	Treble Toppers	197
70	Kevin Styles	Olivanewtonjahn	197
71	Alan Westrop	Lunatic Legion	197
72	Gillian Ross	Bermies Fleet	197
73	Andrew Kavanagh	Super Snipers FC	197
74	David Harrison	Five Star Fish	197
75	Richard Deane	Not A Match	197
76	Andrew P Heale	Shortstrow	197
77	Malcolm Angus	Vin's Magicians	197
78	Jim Byrne	Perennis	197
79	John Laird	The Wine In	197
80	Brian Campbell	Saturday Sunday	197
81	Marion Knappan	Revolution 1	197
82	Chris Baker	Lawnmowers	197
83	Charles Duncanson	Albino Stripes	197
84	Gary Levermore	Tora-Co Team	197
85	David Shaw	On Demand	197
86	The Garden	Harshstar Who?	197
87	Zane Rankin	One Paul Byrne	197
88	The Dhead	The B Team	197
89	Alan Parker	Random Punter	197
90	Michael Hayward	Ernam United	197
91	Colin Hoad	Assistant	197
92	Richard Low	Geor United	197
93	Florian Goltzen	Faget XI	197
94	St Nicholas	Colour Me Blue	197
95	Tony Burns	Barnet St Boys	197
96	Kath Davies	Less Eleven	197
97	Andy French	Andy's Allstars	197
98	Phil Taylor	Peter 7	197
99	Mike Hawke	Holyump Yagler	197

Plus two others on 175 points

## First ON-Target winner nets £500 for a modest team score

Even if your team only notched up 3 or 14 points last week, you could find yourself considerably better off in time for Christmas

**C**ongratulations to Peter Kennedy of Basildon, the very first winner of ON-Target, who today finds himself £500 richer and possessor of an EA Sports Pack (see below for details). Fourteen other managers have also won themselves excellent prizes.

This week is your second chance to play this brilliant new game for all entrants in the Times Fantasy League. All managers have the chance to win a share of £28,000 of new prizes. The Times has teamed up with EA Sports, the creators of outstanding computer sports games, to offer you the chance to own the renowned FIFA 99. Every week you have the chance to win:

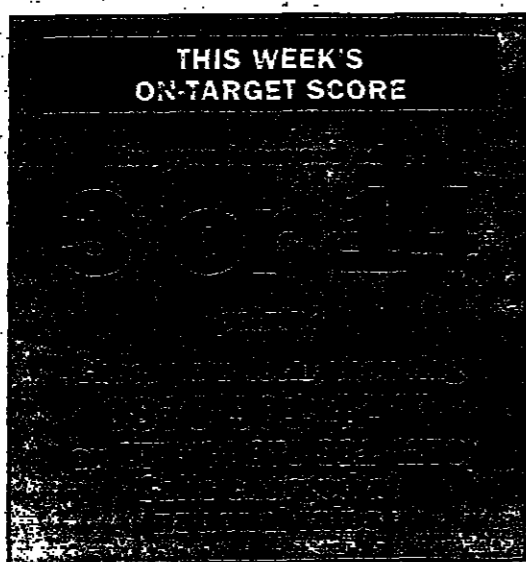
- 1st Prize: £500 plus an EA Sports Pack
- 4 runners up: EA Sports Packs
- 10 additional runners up: FIFA 99 CD-Rom.

Each EA Sports Pack contains: FIFA 99 for the PlayStation; FIFA 99 for the PC; EA Sports T-Shirt, key ring and mini football plus a record bag.

IF YOU already have a team in the main Fantasy League, then you are all ready to play ON-Target. Simply check your Fantasy League player's score each week and see if their weekly points total is the same as our ON-Target score shown in the paper each Tuesday. If you have scored the exact target points that week, then a quick call to our ON-Target winners' line (national rate call) will put you in the draw to win one of the 14 prizes.

The ON-Target score may be high or low. There could be more than one score (such as today). It could be a minus score. So it's worth checking your performance every week.

Just have your PIN number handy to call the winners line on:



ing, enter now by filling in the entry form. There are no limits to how many teams you enter. Not only could you win the ON-Target prize, but you could win the main game weekly (£500) or monthly (£1,000) prizes.

**HOW TO ENTER:** Look up your player's weekly point scores opposite and add them up, or call the checklist 0640 625 012. If your total score for this week matches the ON-Target number, then call our claim line on 0640 625 012 (calls charged at national rate, should last about a minute).

Claims must be made before midnight on Sunday night. The lines then close until the next game starts on Tuesday morning.

If you have scored the correct number of points AND called the claim line, you go into the draw. Just look in the paper on the following Tuesday to see if you have won.

Managers with the correct points who have not called the claim line will not be entered. Calls that are incomplete, inaudible or invalid will not be entered. All teams in the draw must conform to the main game rules.

**Winners**

This week's winners are: Peter Kennedy of Basildon (EA Sports Pack); Chris Glover of Chorley; Robert Beaumont of York; Chris Thompson of Sandy, Bedfordshire; and John Barden of Herne Bay (EA Sports Pack); David Walker of Kendal; Neville Emms of Freshwater, Isle of Wight; Wynne Evans of Shrewsbury; Cellium Shearman of Edinburgh; Tracey Lomas of Leamington Spa; Nigel Morrison of Wirral; William Woolley of Sevenoaks; David Parmentier of High Wycombe; Chris Tabor of Stockport; and Russell Baillie of Tisbury, Wiltshire (FIFA 99 CD-Roms).



**ON-TARGET CHRISTMAS QUIZ**

A magnum of champagne awaits our Christmas winner plus three runners-up prizes of The Spirit of Football, with superb photographs by Sportsphoto. Simply work out the seasonal connection between these four players. Put your answers plus name and address on a postcard and send to Fantasy Football Christmas Quiz, Sport Department, The Times, Pennington Street, London E1 9XN to arrive by first post Monday January 4 when the draw will be made. No e-mails or faxes, please. Normal TNL competition rules apply.

Last week the four players were Richard Dryden, Noel Blake, Stephen Hughes and Michael Owen. Could they possibly be related to John Dryden, early poet laureate, William Blake, Wilfred Owen and the late poet laureate, Ted Hughes?

## CHECK YOUR SCORES TELEPHONE 0640 62 51 02

**YOUTH LEAGUE TOP 10**

1	Robert Anderson	Robert's Rovers	198
2	Richard Low	Geocir United	175
3	Allison Carter	The Plugholes	174
4	Matthew Forster	Mattys-Monsters	174
5	Robert Licalzi	The Hill Billies	174
6	Rob Gillivrand	Brand 1	173
7	Graham Jevon	Gag The Wine In	173
8	Catherine Coway	Spidee City	172
9	Philip Chaefer	The Phil Squips	172
10	David Switbank	Titus All Stars	171

Plus three others on 171 points



Steve Lomas: features in league-topping Ekuban Family

## Keeping it clean to pick up points

THIS weekend Southampton's Paul Jones joined the select band of goalkeepers who have contributed assists so far in The Times Fantasy League. His long punt down the middle found Egil Ostenstad via a flick-on from James Beattie to gain two vital points for the few managers that own him. Despite this, he still finds himself on minus three points for the campaign.

Other beneficiaries of 'bonus' assists have been Newcastle's Shay Given, who has set up two goals so far with his long goal-kicking, David James, whose long and accurate throw led to a Michael Owen goal, and Charlton's Sasa Ilie.

However, the main concern for a goalkeeper must be clean sheets — a dying breed over the last few weeks. A low-scoring start to the Premiership saw a plethora of clean sheets, but winter has coincided with an increase in goals scored.

One team who seem to have sorted out their defensive frailties are Newcastle United, looking as tight as they were when Kenny Dalglish was in charge. Pit-again Shay Given finds himself behind a rejuvenated back four of Charvet, Dabizas, Howey and Barton, but a serious test awaits on Monday when they visit Liverpool — the opposition that signalled the defensive problems ahead for Gallit in his first game in charge when they scored four in 45 minutes.

Conversely, Aston Villa have leaked goals in recent months after an impressive start to the season. The first nine games saw seven Villa clean sheets, but the next eight only resulted in one complete shut-out. However, Villa are approaching a relatively easy set of games, and the defence is likely to return to its earlier form.

Perhaps the surprise goalkeeping package of the season is Everton's Thomas Myhre. The Norwegian has kept a clean sheet in exactly half of his team's matches and finds himself the second top goalkeeper in The Times Fantasy League — just behind David Seaman.

Seaman's usual rival for the top goalkeeping spot, Peter Schmeichel, has not kept a clean sheet in all competitions for some 12 games and disappointed many managers by conceding three more goals this weekend to reduce his points score to exactly zero. Schmeichel himself has not been playing to his usual high standards, but neither has the rotation of defenders at Old Trafford helped his cause. Perhaps it's time Alex Ferguson chose his best defensive quartet and stood by them week-in, week-out. After all, it never did Arsenal any harm.

MATT SANS

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Security fears cloud a continent's bid to stage World Cup finals for the first time

# Can football risk taking a gamble on South Africa?

In the heart of Soweto, the sound of a ball and the laughter and excitement that follow it recall street football of a bygone European age. It is child's play without fear of being knocked down by cars. We are close to where Nelson Mandela lived before being taken to Robben Island, close to where the 1976 riots began after police shot dead a nine-year-old boy on his way home from school.

Innocence lost: some innocence regained in a game that defied apartheid. Sowetan football accepted whites who dared to cross the colour line and Orlando Pirates, for example, grew out of a Sowetan district where Mandela lived and where Winnie Mandela today has a high-walled, guarded home among her own people. Nearby, a painted sign, "Youth Uprising - Point of No Return" marks the dreadful spot where the late died and President Mandela acknowledges that the World Cup would spell more hope for generations of his people than rugby, athletics and cricket put together.

As President Mandela prepares to pass on his chains of office, so he appeals to the 24-man Fifa executive committee to grant South Africa the most complete symbol yet of its post-apartheid re-emergence. In Johannesburg last week, Mandela recorded his message for the official bid video and, after discussing the balance between past and future, concentrated on the plea for the new generation.

England, he knows, wants a World Cup for the first time in 40 years. By 2006, Germany will have waited 32 years, Brazil 56. But Africa has never staged the event and, though there are bids from Morocco, Egypt and Ghana, it is South Africa, if anywhere on the Dark Continent, that has the stadiums, communications, hotels and transportation that a World Cup demands.

It also has Mandela's unique sentiment. However, Cape Town had that and still failed 18 months ago to convince the International Olympic Committee that it could safely stage the 2004 Games. South Africa is cursed by more than 30 shootings per day and 17,709 murders in less than a year, so how can it convince the world governing body that it is ready to secure 64 matches over five weeks in 12 stadiums and eight cities?

The point hit home last month when Patrick Rousseau, the chairman of the West Indies Cricket Board, and his wife were robbed at gunpoint outside the Soweto Oval less than 24 hours after arriving in Johannesburg. Apartheid used to be the enemy; now it is crime. At Johannesburg airport the warning is writ large: "Arrive Alive", the sign says. On the highway is the same notice.

Danny Jordaan, a former



**THE RACE FOR WORLD CUP 2006**  
**Rob Hughes reports from Johannesburg, where even the support of Nelson Mandela has failed to assure everyone that the time is now right**

history lecturer, footballer, cricketer, ANC youth activist and political disciple to Mandela, answers. "The man to ask is J.S. (Sydney) Mufamadi, Minister for Safety and Security," Jordaan, now chief executive for South Africa's bid, said. "I just came from him. He is confident. At the rugby World Cup [in 1995], the athletics [World Cup, in September] and the football African Nations Cup [in 1996] there was no violation of security. You have seen 85,000 packed into the FNB Stadium near Soweto without a single incident."

"Mufamadi will give the guarantee. We have all the law enforcement and intelligence necessary. My view is that when this country returned to the international community the security forces were not able to cope with international crime syndicates based in Africa. The police are beginning to make major breakthroughs and Fifa will see this."

"Under apartheid, we had a police force with no capacity to investigate. They beat you and killed you without trial. We had to engage investigators from outside and we have 2,000 former policemen in jail because they failed to make the transition, some in senior ranks. We are grappling with the situation and gaining ground on organised crime."

Yet, on a casual basis, one met white folk who, born and bred under the Afrikaner system, swear that while Mandela has been a benign face of the ANC, they will emigrate when Thabo Mbeki succeeds him next year.

"I know about apartheid," one man insisted. "I was one of three Jews at a boarding school of 800 Afrikaners. I emigrated to Canada in 1989 but when Mandela became president I came home. My dream was to pass on my skills to young blacks, but they don't want whites teaching. They want to redistribute wealth. I will take whatever I can, legally or illegally, and get out. Just look around you, see the fences, the barbed wire, the guards around our apartments. Who wants to live this way in his own land?"

It is the fear of random crime, rather than a wealth tax, that Joel Stransky cites as the reason he may not go back to South Africa after his contract with Leicester rugby club ends. Trevor Phillips, the former Football Association commercial director who has built up the sponsorships of South Africa's Premier Soccer League, believes that this fear is exaggerated. "I wouldn't have missed the last 2½ years for anything," Phillips said. "After the FA bureaucracy this



Youngsters playing at a Soweto school are hopeful that their country can win the race for football's greatest prize. Photograph: Juda Ngwenya

is a godsend. I came here at 55 thinking I was too cynical to get involved in the emotions, but it sucks you in. The African has made soccer his province, his part of South Africa.

"No one will deny there is an enormous amount of crime. It's a challenge to government but, if you analyse it, most of the crime is centred on deprived areas. You won't be exposed unless you go into the townships." Yet Phillips's contract is drawing to an end and he is coming home to England. "No one lied to me. It's time for a black chief executive of the soccer league," he said. "They are taking on a good administrator in Joe Nohela." The policy of "affirmative

action" began subtly under Mandela, but there are less patient people around. Lula Xingwana, chairman of the ANC committee on sport, plans legislation to impose black selection in rugby and cricket. The aim is populist; the sportsmen are unmoved. Herschelle Gibbs, one of three black cricketers on the fringe of the national squad, insists: "We want to play because we deserve it, not because of the colour of our skin."

Jordaan shares this commitment to merit. He accepts there is irony in Joao Havelange expanding the World Cup to make places at the finals for Africans who provided his presidential power base

and putting the tournament beyond the resources of most emerging nations. Moreover, Jordaan swiftly found ways of getting among the Fifa family. Last year he officiated at the world youth championship in Malaysia; now he sits on Fifa's marketing and television committee.

Jordaan said: "Because I know executive committee members personally doesn't mean I have their vote. It gives me opportunities to correct false impressions about our infrastructure. We have more than enough stadiums, rugby stadiums will adapt for the World Cup. We are expanding the FNB

Stadium to 120,000 seats, we have world-class roads, rail and air. There are more flights from Cape Town to Johannesburg than London to Manchester and we plan to develop inner-city and inter-city public transport for 2000."

The only fear is "the fear of losing the bid". The annoyance is European presumptuousness. "They plunder African players and I'm worried about the social impact," Jordaan said. But when Sir Bobby Charlton and Franz Beckenbauer, working for rival bids, patronise Africa by suggesting that its turn will come "when it has the organisational skills, maybe in 2010", Jordaan retorts: "Europe wants to deter-

mine when they are ready and also when we are ready. They are not entitled to decide when we are ready."

"We have the requirements to meet the World Cup challenge and it's not good for Fifa to have dominance of the game on one continent." South Africa's cry has the ear of Sepp Blatter, the president of Fifa. Unlike Havelange, who has promised all things to all bidders, he commits himself to Africa - provided that the logistics are met. In 1992 Blatter boldly persuaded Fifa to risk ten Asian qualifying games in Beirut shortly after the ceasefire. Few Fifa members showed up. Those who did had their spirits lifted by the experience of sport helping a country to pleasure after pain.

South Africa is on the edge. It has pioneering vigour, energy, released after repression, but things could get worse before they get better. Its history is older than Britain's, its constitution in its infancy, its road ahead uncharted. Fifa either settles for the safest option (England or Germany) or gambles on the global game.

"It's Africa's Call" is the slogan. The committee of nine Europeans, four Africans, four Asians, four South Americans and one from Trinidad, the United States and New Zealand must choose whether to take that call. If only Mandela was young enough to guide his nation to the end of the line.

## THE COUNTRIES WITH THEIR EYES ON THE PRIZE

Bidding for the 2006 World Cup reaches its first official milestone on December 31, the date by which countries wishing to enter the billion-dollar race must lodge a letter of intent to Fifa, the world governing body of football, in Zurich.

The seven letters so far received are from England, Germany, Brazil, South Africa, Egypt, Ghana and Morocco. Nigeria has yet to confirm speculation that it intends to bid.

On another dimension, Ghana has suggested a pan-African World Cup, across the vast continent that has never staged the World Cup, and Argentina dabbled in proposing a joint venture with Brazil. However, the 24-man Fifa executive committee, which determines the destination, will not favour another complicated joint bid so close to the 2002 Japan/South Korea World Cup.

It will be one nation, probably from South Africa, Germany, Brazil and

England. The bids - involving enormous political, commercial and logistical commitments - face four subsequent deadlines: by April 30, 1999, the countries must confirm their intent; by July 31 they must produce a complete presentation; by the end of September a Fifa inspection panel will assess the infrastructures; and in March 2000 the vote will decide.

The prize is extraordinary, but so are the demands of organising a 32-nation event involving 12 stadiums capable of seating a minimum of 40,000 with the logistics of travel, accommodation, security, organisation and telecommunications under review. Political and economic stability will help, as will the ability to keep the heads of the hosting Football Association in situ.

### TOMORROW

Why Germany remain slight favourites



Post-apartheid South Africa is cursed with violence in the townships

Country	Depth (cm)	Conditions	Runs to Resort		Weather (Spm)	Last snow
			Open	Off/tp		
Austria	20	65	Good	Open	Powder	Snow -4 21/12
Kitzbühel	35	150	Good	Open	Powder	Cloud -14 21/12
St Anton	30	200	Hard	Open	Powder	Cloud -13 21/12
Canada						
Lake Louise	90	100	Good	Open	Powder	Fair -28 18/12
France						
Alpe d'Huez	32	140	Hard	Artificial	Varied	Sun -7 20/12
Avoriaz	25	80	Fair	Open	Varied	Snow -7 20/12
Chamonix	40	140	Good	Snow	Varied	Fair -4 20/12
La Clusaz	25	80	Hard	Open	Varied	Fair -3 21/12
La Plagne	20	100	Good	Open	Varied	Snow -5 21/12
La Tignes	25	100	Hard	Artificial	Varied	Fair -3 21/12
Les Arcs	32	155	Good	Open	Powder	Cloud -5 21/12
Megève	10	70	Fair	Snow	Powder	Fair -2 21/12
Tignes	45	140	Good	Open	Varied	Snow -7 21/12
Val d'Isère	44	105	Good	Open	Varied	Snow -1 21/12
Valmorel	25	70	Good	Open	Varied	Fair -3 21/12
Germany						
Cervinia	10	130	Good	Open	Varied	Fair -1 21/12
Cortina	5	20	Hard	Closed	Heavy	Fair -2 21/12
Liegnen	13	94	Good	Artificial	Crusty	Fine -2 20/12
Norway						
Gaio	40	40	Fair	Open	Powder	Fair -6 20/12
Switzerland						
Crans Montana	5	120	Fair	Artificial	Varied	Fine -8 12/12
Davos	25	120	Good	Open	Varied	Cloud -5 21/12
Klosters	5	120	Good	Open	Varied	Snow -5 21/12
Murren	30	100	Good	Artificial	Varied	Snow -3 21/12
Saas Fee	10	140	Hard	Artificial	Varied	Snow -3 21/12
St Moritz	10	80	Fair	Closed	Powder	Snow -3 21/12
Verbier	15	150	Good	Closed	Varied	Snow -3 21/12
Villars	20	80	Hard	Closed	Varied	Snow -3 21/12
Zermatt	10	90	Fair	Open	Varied	Snow -4 21/12
United States						
Aspen	60	75	Hard	Open	Powder	Snow -20 21/12
Deer Valley	70	80	Good	Open	Powder	Cloud -17 20/12

## SAILING

# Golding finds silver lining

IT CAN all go wrong so quickly when you are single-handed in the Southern Ocean and averaging more than 300 miles a day. But Mike Golding, of Great Britain, on *Team Group 4*, is proving that he is just as proficient at putting everything back together in his Open 60 as he was on his old steel Global Challenge yacht.

Golding is now due south of the western tip of Australia with 2,800 miles still to sail to the finish of the second leg of the Around Alone race at Auckland. The Briton is disputing second place for the leg with Marc Thiercelin, of France, on *Somewhere*, over whom Golding has a ten-hour advantage carried over from the first leg.

Both have arrived Giovanni Soldini, of Italy, on *FLA*, to build a lead of more than 400 miles in the past couple of days, but Golding never planned to cover the erratic Italian, over whom his first-

By EDWARD GORMAN SAILING CORRESPONDENT

leg margin is nearly three days. In his latest report, Golding described a sudden onset of chaos on board *Team Group 4* that might have stalled a lesser man for a lot longer than it did Golding.

After making a small alteration to his course, the automatic pilots suddenly threw *Team Group 4* into a crash gybe. As Golding was trying to get the sails down, the staysail sheet caught in the main halyard and, within seconds, the main halyard which had pulled out of its mountings and was flopping dangerously on the foredeck with its contents spilling overboard.

"So now it's dark [isn't it always?], I'm in a 60ft yacht, crash-gybed with no working pilots, and sails which I can't get down because they are jammed at the mast and need a winch - most of which is on

the four-kilometre journey to the bottom - to free them," Golding said. "Below, the two rudders are at 45 degrees to each other as the tiller bars slipped. One pilot ram is broken and both pilot reference units, without which the pilots won't work, have been ripped from their mountings. What a mess."

An exhausted Golding spent all night trying to clear it up and get the boat going again. He even managed to jury-rig the broken winch with a cat's cradle of vector lines to hold it in place. To his astonishment, the next position scheduled early yesterday showed he had moved ahead of Thiercelin into second place.

Alex Bennett has bought Mark Turner's Mini, *Carphone Warehouse*, and will begin his campaign to win the single-handed Mini-Transat race next year in earnest with the Mini-Fastnet, which starts in June.

## SNOOKER

# Revolt threatens Masters

THE Thailand Masters will slip into abeyance after its staging in March, should the rebellion against the present regime of the World Professional Billiards and Snooker Association (WPBSA) fail at the annual meeting in Birmingham tomorrow.

Sindhu Pulsirivong, a guiding light behind the growth of the game in the Far East, has become so disillusioned with the WPBSA board in general and with Rex Williams, the chairman, in particular, that only a change of power will keep the popular world ranking tournament alive.

Pulsirivong, a philanthropic multi-millionaire, is the chairman of the World Confederation of Billiards Sport and President of the Thailand Billiards and Snooker Association. "If Williams and his supporters remain in control of the WPBSA, there will be no more ranking events in my country. I would be wasting

By PHIL YATES

any time if I carried on and it's too precious for that to happen," Pulsirivong said. "It seems that if you disagree with Williams, as I have done, you are branded an enemy."

Pulsirivong, who resigned his WPBSA directorship in June after opposing a number of policy decisions, has also been incensed by a recent newspaper article in which Williams allegedly described Steve Davis, a candidate for election to the board, as "clueless and useless". "Davis, in my opinion, is the greatest ambassador the game has had. To try and discredit him is a mindless exercise," Pulsirivong said.

On the table, Mark Williams has emerged as a realistic contender for the world championship after winning the Irish Open title with a 9-4 victory over Alan McManus in Dublin on Sunday.

Williams, who proved his strength of temperament by edging Stephen Hendry 10-9 on a respoited black in the Benson and Hedges Masters final ten months ago, has incorporated a new depth of tactical consideration. He is the most accurate long potter in the game and compiled a century break in each of his five matches in Ireland.

"He can be world champion, and pretty soon at that," Ian Doyle, his manager and head of the Cue Masters stable, said. "Mark has cut out the carelessness which used to plague him and he's developed rhythm."

Williams, 23, who trounced Ken Doherty 5-1 in the quarter-finals and John Parrott 6-1 in the semi-finals before establishing a 6-0 lead over McManus, has now prevailed in four world-ranking competitions. If he retains his Dublin form into the new year that number will quickly swell.

FOOTBALL

Fifa sees chance to end home advantage

By Rob Hughes

THE unwise bunglers of Lancaster Gate may have sacrificed more than England's word of honour in international football administration...



Williams: extreme naivety

leged vice-presidency within Fifa. Ironically, Will is the chairman of Fifa's committee for legal matters...

vocacy to persuade Fifa that England will be here in future. This has all come about, first, because Wiseman's refusal to acknowledge the "gentleman's agreement"...

Then came the revelation that Wiseman and Kelly had moved £3.2 million out of the FA coffers to grant to Wales; it had honour, in as much as the British Isles parent body was assisting a neighbour with development funds...

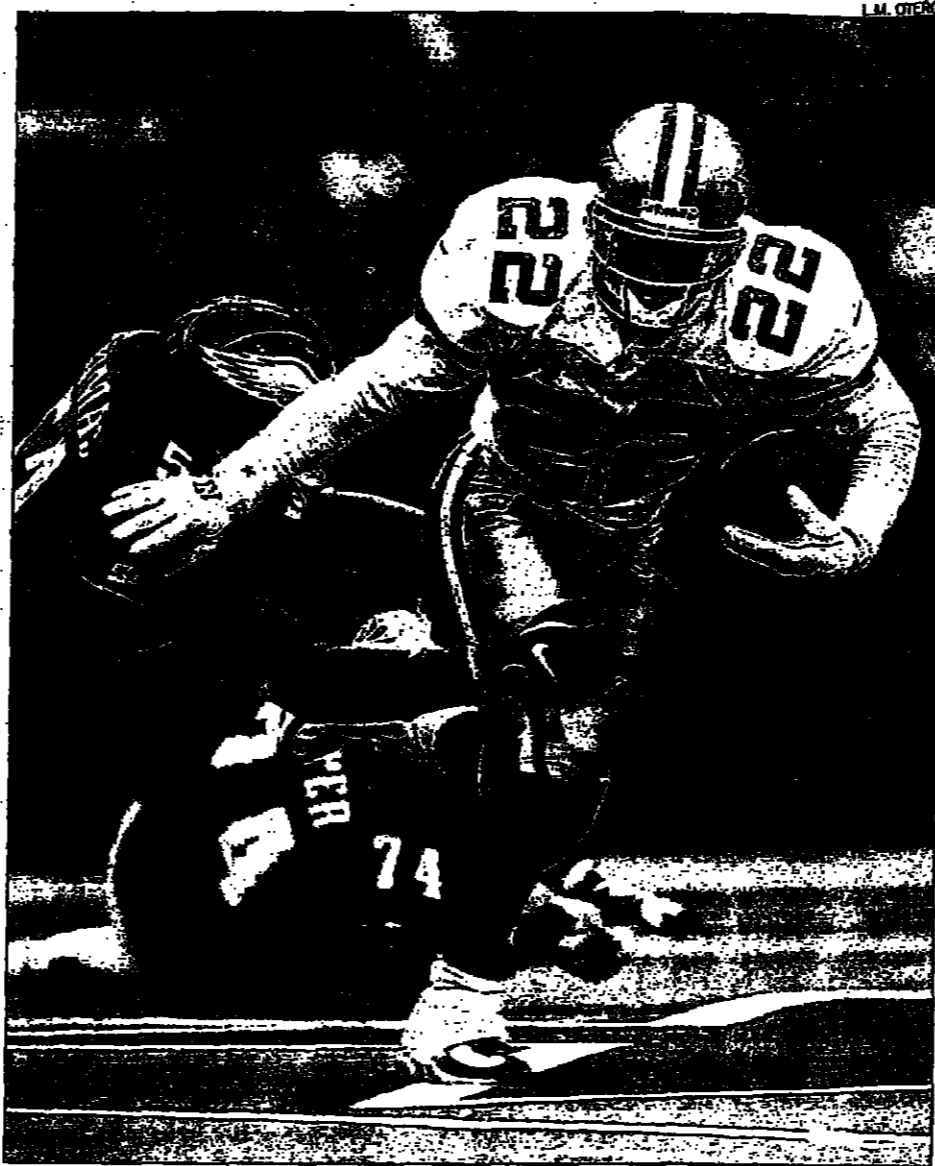
Cardinals keep wily Plummer on tap

By Oliver Holt

THE drama of the play-offs might still be a fortnight away but as teams such as the New England Patriots and the New York Jets clinched their places in the post-season jamboree last Sunday...

There, in the gentle heat of midwinter at the Sun Devil Stadium in Tempe, the Arizona Cardinals kept their hopes of grabbing one of the wildcard berths alive when they staged an improbable late comeback to deny the New Orleans Saints...

Plummer, the Cardinals quarterback, has earned his nickname in his two seasons in the National Football League (NFL) because of his ability to wriggle out of trouble...



Emmitt Smith, of the Dallas Cowboys, leaves Philadelphia Eagles players trailing

range. Chris Jacke converted the kick to seal a 19-17 victory that means the Cardinals will get the last National Football Conference (NFC) wild-card spot if they beat the San Diego Chargers in Tempe next weekend...

too many times, but everyone knows we are never going to give up. We all know I have got the ability to scramble and the opportunity happened to come at the right time for us.

If the Cardinals provided the most dramatic victory of the day, the most surprising was achieved by the New England Patriots. They shrugged off the absence of Drew Bledsoe, their quarterback, and Terry Glenn, their leading receiver...

While the Patriots were guaranteeing their own playoff spot, the Jets were in the process of completing a remarkable turn around in their own fortunes. Only two seasons ago, they lost 15 of their 16 regular-season games...

Their success is a testament to the methods of their coach, Bill Parcells, who took over when they were at their lowest ebb. "It's pretty emotional," Parcells said, "I couldn't be happier. We're not the greatest, but mentally we're pretty tough now. We've got a lot ahead of us and I look forward to the challenge. By no means do I feel we are done."

EQUESTRIANISM: RIDER LANDS FIRST VICTORY ON LAST DAY OF OLYMPIA CHAMPIONSHIPS

Skelton takes applause on Showtime

By Jenny MacArthur

NICK SKELTON delighted the 6,500-strong crowd on the final day of the Olympia show-jumping championships yesterday with a thrilling display of speed jumping on Showtime in the Eurosport Christmas Hamper, which earned him his first win of the show...

knew, small fry for Showtime, who has won many grands prix during her seven-year career, including Lisbon and Madrid. But Skelton, in deference to her age, has dropped him down a level. "She's 13 and now I've got Hopes Are High, there's no need for her to do the big classes."

eleventh place in the world championships in Rome this year was the best British placing, finished third on Equify.



Skelton: thrilling display

land, gained an unexpected bonus when he won the P&O Events Christmas Eve Six Bar on Gravour, the opening event of the day, and picked up an additional £220 from the on-course bookmakers, having dictated the odds on himself. "They gave me 8-1, but I told them I had no chance of winning so they changed it to 22-1."

Davies, who nearly gave up showjumping in July when he was "jocked off" Hopes Are High [David Broome, the then owner of the horse, decided Skelton's riding would suit him better] had only entered Satchmo at the last minute. He was pleasantly surprised to survive the first two rounds after crashing over the practice fence in the collecting ring. However, the final round proved too much for the seven-year-old, who demolished the last fence. "He was spooking a lot - horses by Zeus often do," he said, in a reference to Satchmo's sire.

FOR THE RECORD

Table with sports results for American Football, Soccer, Basketball, Tennis, and Hockey.

CRICKET

Table with cricket match results including County Championship and T20 matches.

EQUESTRIANISM

Table with equestrian eventing and show jumping results.

SPORT IN BRIEF

Warwickshire goalkeeper, collapsed while playing in the Midlands indoor qualifying tournament at Perdiswell, Worcestershire, on Saturday and died later in hospital. Play was abandoned and the event postponed.

TODAY'S FIXTURES

Table listing today's fixtures for Football, Basketball, and Tennis.

FOOTBALL

Table listing football fixtures for various leagues.

ICE HOCKEY

Table listing ice hockey fixtures and results.

HOLIDAY POOLS FORECASTS

Table with holiday pool forecasts for Saturday and Sunday.

FOOTBALL

Table with football fixtures for various leagues.

FOOTBALL

Table with football fixtures for various leagues.

Product Recall Notice for Dream Cuisine and Premier 360 Cordless Filter Kettles. Includes an image of a kettle and contact information.

Selectors given few positive clues before fourth Test match

# England no closer to solving puzzle

FROM ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT IN HOBART

**HOBART (third day of four):** England XI, with eight second-innings wickets in hand, are 342 runs ahead of Australian XI

NOTHING that happened during a seven-hour day at Bellerive can have crystallised England's thinking for the Christmas Test match. The bowlers likely to feature in Melbourne did not take a wicket between them and a putative duel for the final batting place degenerated into irrelevance against the type of declaration bowling that used to disfigure three-day county cricket.

The day, in fact, was dominated by two Australians. Darren Lehmann's recall to Test cricket was upset by his own failure and upstaged by Greg Blewett's regulation century against England. Lehmann's declaration, 176 runs behind, was an admirable attempt to create something out of stalemate, though the subsequent cricket was extremely short on authenticity.

John Crawley and Mark Butcher, whose Test positions are both under threat, put on 117 in 21 overs. Sounds fine, until it is known that the Australian XI were still missing three of their four specialist bowlers through injury and much of the early attack was undertaken half-heartedly by Lehmann and Stuart Law, neither of whom would prefer to keep any self-respecting batsman awake at night.

England finished with enough of a lead to declare early in the morning, which was always Lehmann's intention, but the runs made by Crawley and Butcher should count for little when the selectors conduct what promises to be a delicate process of elimination.

Australia's selection was more straightforward. The inclusion of Lehmann, 28, for his first home Test and his first anywhere against England, was widely anticipated. Ricky Ponting, who is left out, had lost form even before being unseated by his self-confessed approach from a Sydney bookmaker — an innocent encounter, so far as Ponting was concerned, but an emotive was given the present climate. Plainly, Ponting was vulner-

able after two low scores during the third Test in Adelaide. When, on Sunday, he was out for nought during Tasmania's Sheffield Shield match in Brisbane, the one question remaining was which of Australia's enviable array of reserve batsmen would replace him.

Lehmann, now captaining South Australia and therefore another candidate to succeed Mark Taylor, was identified as a Test batsman a decade ago but has fulfilled his potential only this year, playing three games in India and Pakistan. He is a destructive left-hander, capable of scoring heavily and rapidly, but England would probably prefer to bowl to him than Blewett.

Another South Australian — ironically, vice-captain to Lehmann, whom he replaces as Yorkshire's overseas player next summer — Blewett scored centuries in each of his first three Ashes Tests and made another for his state against this touring team last month. His hundred yesterday was his fifth against England, each one bigger than the last.

His solitary blemish came when he had made 116, a driving return catch that Ben Holliscoke could not hold. Had he done so, England would have taken four wickets in 13 balls, a quite extraordinary intermission in a match that has seen only 12 batsmen out in three days.

Halfway through yesterday, it seemed England might not take a wicket at all. The pitch was unresponsive for Alex Tudor and Angus Fraser, and when Peter Such did turn the occasional ball, attacking



Lehmann: destructive



Blewett cuts powerfully during his innings of 169 not out against England yesterday

shots unflinchingly looped into vacant territory. Matthew Elliott looked a shade more susceptible than Blewett, though he was hardly living dangerously. Potentially his worst moment was when the strong wind blew off umpire Peter Parker's hat as Holliscoke bowled. Elliott's imperturbable concentration avoided a tricky adjudication.

After lunch, Blewett passed a hundred in 224 minutes and the opening stand reached 206 before Holliscoke produced the exclamation mark in a day otherwise short on punctuation. He dismissed Elliott, to a well-judged catch by Tudor off a leading edge, and four balls later claimed Corey Richards leg-before for nought, hitting across the line.

Lehmann, batting as if his mind was elsewhere, slashed one wide ball from Dominic Cork to third man for four and was then superbly caught at first slip, low and left-handed by Atherton, as he attempted a repeat. England might be ill-advised to assume they have uncovered his weakness.

There was time for Blewett to punish Holliscoke for his lapse by taking 17 off an over, and for Law to tamely top-edge a pull against Ramprakash to mid-wicket, before Lehmann declared. Atherton responded by dropping himself down the order, a distance from the indignity of what followed.

Beset by injuries, the Australians could not entirely be blamed, though the fact that Blewett was not used, while Lehmann and Elliott — part-time bowlers at best — shared 12 overs told its own story of a means to an end. The two Englishmen seeking valid scores on their CVs will have had decidedly mixed feelings.

**SCOREBOARD FROM HOBART**

ENGLAND: First Innings 489 for 6 dec (M A Atherton 210 not out, G A Hick 125, M R Ramprakash 63)

Second Innings

M A Butcher not out..... 85

J P Crawley lbw b Lehmann..... 63

B C Holliscoke c Blewett b Elliott..... 17

D G Cork not out..... 0

Extras (nb 1)..... 1

Total (2 wks, 37 overs)..... 166

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-118, 2-164, 3-136-0; Lehmann 71-45-1; Bevan 10-1-17-0; Elliott 5-0-15-1.

AUSTRALIA XI: First Innings

M T G Elliott c Tudor b Holliscoke..... 81

G S Blewett not out..... 169

C J Richards lbw b Holliscoke..... 0

D S Lehmann c Atherton b Cork..... 4

S G Law c Butcher b Ramprakash..... 21

M G Bevan not out..... 0

Extras (b 1, lb 3, nb 14)..... 18

Total (4 wks dec, 77 overs)..... 253

A C Gilchrist, B P Julien, G R Robertson, P R Reifel and M S Kasparowicz did not bat.

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-206, 2-207, 3-212, 4-276.

BOWLING: Tudor 14-3-54-0; Fraser 20-3-53-0; Such 15-1-62-0; Cork 11-3-33-1; Holliscoke 10-1-32-2; Ramprakash 6-2-29-1; Hick 1-0-3-0.

Umpires: S G Davies and P D Parker.

## Kallis joins Glamorgan

By RICHARD HOBSON

Middlesex in 1997, will miss the start of the next campaign because of the World Cup. Gloucestershire, still unhappy that their 14-year association with Courtney Walsh ended acrimoniously, are believed to have earmarked Andrew Symonds ahead of Shyam Yojng as a replacement. Symonds, born in Birmingham and raised in Queensland, played for the county as an Englishman in 1995-96. He eventually pledged his future to Australia after turning down the offer of an England A tour place. New Zealand beat India by 66 runs after the two sides had

finally made it onto the field of play yesterday for an exhibition limited overs match at the Carisbrook Oval in Dunedin. A New Zealand XI scored 304 for six in 50 overs and the Indian XI replied with 238 for eight. The match was played on what would have been the fourth day of the first Test, which was abandoned because of rain. Zimbabwe celebrated their first series victory abroad after the third and final Test against Pakistan in Faisalabad was abandoned without a ball being bowled. Dense fog and bad light prevented play on all five days, which gave Zimbabwe a 1-0 series victory.

Answers from page 33

SERAB (b) A mirage, adapted from the Arabic. "This kind of mirage is not peculiar to Egypt. It is known in Persia also, where it is called the Serab or Sir-ab [miraculous water]."

UJIGAMI (c) In feudal Japan, the ancestral deity of an uji or noble family. Later, the tutelary deity of a particular village or area. "The ujigami venerated by members of certain uji were human or totemic progenitors."

WINNEBAGO (d) (A member of) a Siouan people of eastern Wisconsin. The native word means "person of dirty water": an illusion to the muddy waters of the Fox River below Lake Winnebago, which became clogged with dead fish in the heat of the summer, 1827: "An express reached here this morning from Galena with information of hostilities having been commenced by the Winnebago Indians on the settlers."

STREPITOSO (a) A musical direction indicating that a composition be played in a spirited or boisterous manner. In Italian "noisy", "loud". "The first act finale of both operas ends with a canonic andantino in A flat leading to a prolonged strepitoso in C major."

SOLUTION TO WINNING MOVE

1 Nc2 wins as if 1...Bxb2; 2 Rch7-Qxh7; 3 Nx7! is mate.

## Alcohol's evil influence

Last Orders Channel 4, 9.00pm

Made over ten days in a general hospital in Coventry, Kate Barker's film is as potent a statement as you are likely to get of how lives can be wrecked by drink. Three-year-old Antoinette suffers from an eating disorder and stunted growth because her mother drank heavily during pregnancy. Leslie took to drink after his first marriage broke up and alcohol has destroyed his nerves and brain. David, who is 60, is dying of a liver disease. These are sad figures, deserving sympathy. It can be a different matter in accident and emergency. On weekend nights one third of their patients are there because they have been drinking heavily and got into fights or been assaulted by drunks. Many watching the film will agree with the surgeon angry that this mindless behaviour is using up precious resources.



Elizabeth Banks and Terence Hillier in 'Things You Do For Love' (ITV, 10.25pm)

Agas and Their Owners BBC2, 9.30pm

The irony is that something considered to be so quintessentially English should be a Swedish invention, designed by a Nobel scientist no less. Nor was the Aga travelled across the Atlantic, except in very small numbers. There are 350,000 owners in Britain, but only 2,500 in the entire United States. All this and much more can be gleaned from James Treacy's skilful documentary, which suggests that you do not have to be either dotty or obsessed to be an Aga owner, though it helps. One couple use the Aga to keep their parrot warm in winter and we meet the woman who runs Sunday afternoon concerts in her kitchen with the Aga complementing the music. The film also features two Aga "haters", who deplore the cult of Aga worship.

determined to keep the child. Then Hilton's wife found out, though matters were not finally resolved for another 20 years. The story has been dramatised by Nick McCarthy with Terence Hillier as the singer and Elizabeth Banks as Christie. The dialogue belongs more to fiction than to fact ("I was 17 and innocent... it was love, I suppose") but the real Ronnie and Christie acted as consultants on the project so perhaps that it is how it was.

The Things You Do For Love ITV, 10.25pm

Older viewers may remember Ronnie Hilton as a singing star of the 1950s. Less well known, because his mistress turned down a lucrative offer from the press, was his affair with a dancer called Christie. The complication was that he was married with children. The first time Christie got pregnant he paid for an abortion. The second time she was

In Search of Tarzan with Jonathan Ross ITV, 11.30pm

The 80th anniversary of the first Tarzan film is the excuse for Jonathan Ross to take a playful trawl through a canon which now numbers 48 titles, not to mention television versions and a forthcoming Disney animation. Mostly it is a clips-and-interviews exercise, high on anecdote. Tarzan actors reminding include Gordon Scott and Miles O'Keefe, who played the role which won countless fans on his Dad. Among the James are Bo Derek and the most famous, Maureen O'Sullivan, in her last interview. Footage includes O'Sullivan and Weissmuller swimming in the nude, a scene too far for the 1934 censor. Only at the end do we get an attempt to explain Tarzan's appeal, from a possibly unexpected fan in Ray Bradbury. A bonus is the Peter Cook and Dudley Moore comedy sketch about the one-legged actor who fancies himself in the part. Peter Waymark

### RADIO CHOICE

**Pollyanna** Radio 4, 11.30am

Radio 4 is putting out some very good programming under the title "family dramas". This Christmas meaning that the network has noticed that the kids are on holiday. Whether this approach works in the light of Radio 4's abandonment of any formal children's content throughout the year is a moot point but Pollyanna is an example of a story for all generations, even if the children cannot be persuaded to sit through it. Parents will hope they do, for Pollyanna is a gem. She is sent to live with a distant aunt when her parents die and the story is one of a triumph of the will: Pollyanna is determined to be cheerful whatever the circumstances and her determination wins the day. This adaptation, over three days, is by Peter Kerry.

### RADIO CHOICE

**The Life and Death of Belfast Celtic** Radio 5 Live, 7.30pm

Nothing in the subsequent life of George Best albeit the fact that he possessed a sublime, football talent. Tonight and tomorrow night he makes a welcome reappearance in an unusual role as the narrator of this two-parter that is in many ways a microcosm of the troubles that beset Northern Ireland. Best knows a thing or two about those (his sister was shot by terrorists) and here he tells a story of hopes dashed. Belfast Celtic was a non-sectarian football team which won countless trophies. But long before the present troubles began in 1969, sectarian crowd trouble, especially in games against Linfield, erupted with pitch invasions and even shots fired. Fifty years ago this week the club was forced to fold. Peter Barraud

**RADIO 1 (BBC)**

6.30am Chris Moyles 9.00 Simon Mayo 12.00 Keen Channing 2.00pm Mark Radcliffe 4.00 Dave Pearce 6.00 Steve Lamacz: The Evening Session '98. A musical review of the last 12 months. 10.00 John Peel 12.00 The Breakfast 2.00am Emma 6.00 Scott Mills

**RADIO 2 (BBC)**

6.00am Alex Lester 7.30 Wake Up to Wogan 9.30 Ken Bruce 12.00 Jimmy Young 2.00pm Ed Stewart 5.05 Johnnie Walker 7.00 Brian Johnson 8.00 Brian Johnson 8.00 Alan Partridge 10.00 Richard Ainsworth 12.00 Keen Channing 3.00am Mo Dutta

**RADIO 5 LIVE (BBC)**

5.00am Morning Reports 6.00 Breakfast with Julian Warlock and Victoria Derbyshire 8.00 Brian Hayes 12.00 The Midday News 1.00pm John Peel 2.00pm Radio 5 Live with Peter Allen and Jane Garvey 7.00 News Extra with David McNeil 7.30 The Life and Death of Belfast Celtic. See Choice 6.00 Play It Again. Listeners select their favourite sporting moments from the BBC's archive. 8.00 When White Comes. Simon West investigates what county cricketers do in the winter. 10.00 Late Night Live 1.00am Up All Night with Rhod Sharp

**VIRGIN**

6.00am Jeremy Clark 9.30 Russ Williams 1.00pm Nick Abbot 4.00 Janet Scott 6.45 Jerry Lee Grace 10.00 James Merritt 2.00am Richard Allen

**TALK RADIO**

6.00am Bill Overton & Sally Meen 9.00 Scott Chisholm 12.00pm Lorraine Kelly 2.00pm Anna Reardon 4.00 Peter Dinkley 5.00 The Sports Zone 8.00 Mike Hill 1.00am Ian Collins

**RADIO 3**

6.00am On Air Petroc Twilley with arts news and music by composers including Mozart, Bachman, Prokofiev

9.00 Masterworks with Peter Hobday. Ground (Faust, George), Beethoven (String Quartet in G, Op 18 No 2), Strauss (Horn Concerto No 2)

10.30 Sound Stories: The Christmas Story Richard Baker tells the story of Jesus's birth

12.00 Composer of the Week: Elbert 1.00pm The Radio 3 Promenade Concert | Fogliorni plays Christmas music (1)

2.00 The BBC Orchestra BBC Philharmonic under Ian Pearsall. Tostel, Tamara Barto, piano

4.05 Music to Die For AL Kennedy (2/3)

5.00 A Medieval Christmas A ten-part collection of music for Christmas past and present

6.30 Music Moments: Nettle Waters visits the French capital to meet an American in Paris (2/10)

6.00 Discovering Music with Leonard Slatkin: Slatkin and the BBC Philharmonic explore the language of music (2/10)

7.00 Christmas Cookcalls A Christmas edition of the popular series exploring dance band recordings from Britain and America from 1920 to 1945 (2/3)

7.30 Performance on 3 From 40, given on August 18. David Wilson-Johnson, baritone, BBC Singers, BBC Symphony Orchestra under Oliver Knussen and BBC Radio 3 Chorus. Mozart, Piano, Concerto for Benjamin (Somerset Voices), Schubert (Fyrrn to the Series), Scriabin (The Poem of Ecstasy) (1)

8.00 Composer of the Week: Hershey's 20th-Century Retrospective (2/5)

8.20 Celebrity Trio Thomas Zehetner, violin, Tobias Zimmermann, viola, Heinrich Schiff, cello. Schubert (String Quintet in B-flat, D711), Schoenberg (String Trio, Op 45), Mozart (Piano Concerto in E-flat, K455)

10.45 Book, Music and Lyrics Robert Cushman presents a personal view of music (1/5)

11.30 Sir Herbert Ayn Shenton presents a personal view of music with Red Herring and the Colin Patridge Trio in 1998 (1)

12.00 Composer of the Week: Elbert (1) 1.00pm The World's Greatest Music: MacLeod, 3.00 The Bach Family 3.10 Karg-Elert (Passacaglia and Fugue on BACH's 3.50 Amiga (String Quartet No 1 in D major) 3.55 Verdi (Symphony No. 4, RV689) 4.25 Leonard Macleod (Symphonic Suite) 5.15 Rachmaninov (Cello Sonata in G minor, Op 10)

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**MAGIC NUMBERS AND FREE CHAMPAGNE**

What could be more desirable for anyone with sporting blood in their veins? The Times is again offering a bottle of Taittinger champagne to those who contribute a magic number for Christmas. A magic number is one that carries immense sporting weight and every year throws up new ones.

For 1998 how about 1487 - the number of wickets Muttiah Muralitharan took to give Sri Lanka an historic Test victory in England.

Simon Barnes will judge the champagne-worthiness of entries, which should be sent to: Magic Numbers, The Sports Desk, The Times, 1, Pennington Street, London E3 9JN

or by fax to 0171 782 5211 or e-mail to sport@the-times.co.uk. The final collection will be published shortly after Christmas.

**RADIO 4**

5.30am World News 5.35 Shipping Forecast 5.45 Morning News 5.45 Prayer for the Day 5.47 Farming Today Presented by Anne 11

6.00 Today with Sue MacGregor and James Naughtie 6.35 (LW) Yesterday in Parliament

6.50 The Choice: What's the best? profiles people who've made momentous decisions

9.30 Carole for Choirs: Alastair Hurst: Hallelujah

9.45 (LW) Daily Service: Director of music James Whitcomb

9.45 (FM) Serials: Scripts with lezardized Amendo launches puts the year into perspective with thoughts on Richard Branson, disaster movies and New Year's Eve

10.00 Woman's Hour with Martha Kearney and guests

11.00 Nature: A Wolf to the North - Fear (1)

11.30 Pollyanna New series. Dramatisation of Eleanor H

12.00 (LW) News 12.04pm You and Yours Topical consumer news and investigations, introduced by Titta Rawlinson and Mark Whitaker

1.00 The World at One with Nick Clarke

1.30 Full Orchestra: Leading orchestras compete in a display of musical knowledge, presided over by Tony Pearson

2.00 The Archers (1)

2.15 Afternoon Play: Henry's Leg Dramatisation of the award-winning children's novel by Ann Pflaum. A boy's love of junk lands him in the middle of a real-life thriller. With Adam Nagaitis

3.00 The Exchange: O'T' - 1989 4944 Robin Loring assesses listeners' opinions of a topical issue

3.30 Beating the System: Alan deciding that there are too many constabulations, Simon Evers sets out to redraw the heavens (2/3)

3.45 Colonel Clay - Master of Deceit by Grant Allen, read by Martin Jarvis (2/5)

4.00 A Good Turn: Sarah LeFanu invites writer Bel Mooney and Dr Mark Porter to discuss their favourite paperbacks

4.30 Shop Talk: Business matters, presented by Heidi Payne

5.00 PM With Clive English and Chris Love

6.00 Six O'Clock News

6.30 The Store Stand-up comedy from London's Comedy Store, hosted by Simon James

7.00 The Archers: 7.15 Front Row: BBC's new film 'Galahad' the verdict on a new film based on J.R.R. Tolkien's stories, The Archers

7.45 A Mission to Civilise? Obituary: Obituary: Actor's career very interesting number of Serpentine: are turning their backs on Festival

8.40 In Touch: Peter White with news for visually impaired people

9.00 Case Notes: Graham Easton looks at the future of spare-part medicine

9.30 The Choice (1)

10.00 The World Tonight with Robin Lustig

10.45 Christmas in Wales: by Owen Thomas. A Child's Christmas in Wales by Dylan Thomas

11.00 Late Night on 4: The New Show Stand-up with Simon Murray, Dan Freeman, Nick Romero, David Quantick and Jane Baines (1)

11.30 (LW) Today in Parliament

11.30 (FM) Today in Parliament

12.00 News 12.30am The Late Book: Dupe of the Year: The Times columnist Lyne Truss, read by Aram Margolyous

12.48 Shipping Forecast 1.00 Am World Service

**FREQUENCY GUIDE: RADIO 1, FM 97.5-99.8, RADIO 2, FM 88.0-90.2, RADIO 3, FM 90.8-92.4, RADIO 4, FM 92.4-94.8, LW 195, MW 720, RADIO 5 LIVE, MW 893, 908, WORLD SERVICE, MW 648, LW 158 (12.45-5.55pm), CLASSIC FM, FM 100.0-102, VIRGIN RADIO, FM 105.8, MW 1107, 1275, TALK RADIO, MW 1053, 1058, 1059, 1060, 1061, 1062, 1063, 1064, 1065, 1066, 1067, 1068, 1069, 1070, 1071, 1072, 1073, 1074, 1075, 1076, 1077, 1078, 1079, 1080, 1081, 1082, 1083, 1084, 1085, 1086, 1087, 1088, 1089, 1090, 1091, 1092, 1093, 1094, 1095, 1096, 1097, 1098, 1099, 1100, 1101, 1102, 1103, 1104, 1105, 1106, 1107, 1108, 1109, 1110, 1111, 1112, 1113, 1114, 1115, 1116, 1117, 1118, 1119, 1120, 1121, 1122, 1123, 1124, 1125, 1126, 1127, 1128, 1129, 1130, 1131, 1132, 1133, 1134, 1135, 1136, 1137, 1138, 1139, 1140, 1141, 1142, 1143, 1144, 1145, 1146, 1147, 1148, 1149, 1150, 1151, 1152, 1153, 1154, 1155, 1156, 1157, 1158, 1159, 1160, 1161, 1162, 1163, 1164, 1165, 1166, 1167, 1168, 1169, 1170, 1171, 1172, 1173, 1174, 1175, 1176, 1177, 1178, 1179, 1180, 1181, 1182, 1183, 1184, 1185, 1186, 1187, 1188, 1189, 1190, 1191, 1192, 1193, 1194, 1195, 1196, 1197, 1198, 1199, 1200, 1201, 1202, 1203, 1204, 1205, 1206, 1207, 1208, 1209, 1210, 1211, 1212, 1213, 1214, 1215, 1216, 1217, 1218, 1219, 1220, 1221, 1222, 1223, 1224, 1225, 1226, 1227, 1228, 1229, 1230, 1231, 1232, 1233, 1234, 1235, 1236, 1237, 1238, 1239, 1240, 1241, 1242, 1243, 1244, 1245, 1246, 1247, 1248, 1249, 1250, 1251, 1252, 1253, 1254, 1255, 1256, 1257, 1258, 1259, 1260, 1261, 1262, 1263, 1264, 1265, 1266, 1267, 1268, 1269, 1270, 1271, 1272, 1273, 1274, 1275, 1276, 1277, 1278, 1279, 1280, 1281, 1282, 1283, 1284, 1285, 1286, 1287, 1288, 1289, 1290, 1291, 1292, 1293, 1294, 1295, 1296, 1297, 1298, 1299, 1300, 1301, 1302, 1303, 1304, 1305, 1306, 1307, 1308, 1309, 1310, 1311, 1312, 1313, 1314, 1315, 1316, 1317, 1318, 1319, 1320, 1321, 1322, 1323, 1324, 1325, 1326, 1327, 1328, 1329, 1330, 1331, 1332, 1333, 1334, 1335, 1336, 1337, 1338, 1339, 1340, 1341, 1342, 1343, 1344, 1345, 1346, 1347, 1348, 1349, 1350, 1351, 1352, 1353, 1354, 1355, 1356, 1357, 1358, 1359, 1360, 1361, 1362, 1363, 1364, 1365, 1366, 1367, 1368, 1369, 1370, 1371, 1372, 1373, 1374, 1375, 1376, 1377, 1378, 1379, 1380, 1381, 1382, 1383, 1384, 1385, 1386, 1387, 1388, 1389, 1390, 1391, 1392, 1393, 1394, 1395, 1396, 1397, 1398, 1399, 1400, 1401, 1402, 1403, 1404, 1405, 1406, 1407, 1408, 1409, 1410, 1411, 1412, 1413, 1414, 1415, 1416, 1417, 1418, 1419, 1420, 1421, 1422, 1423, 1424, 1425, 1426, 1427, 1428, 1429, 1430, 1431, 1432, 1433, 1434, 1435, 1436, 1437, 1438, 1439, 1440, 1441, 1442, 1443, 1444, 1445, 1446, 1447, 1448, 1449, 1450, 1451, 1452, 1453, 1454, 1455, 1456, 1457, 1458, 1459, 1460, 1461, 1462, 1463, 1464, 1465, 1466, 1467, 1468, 1469, 1470, 1471, 1472, 1473, 1474, 1475, 1476, 1477, 1478, 1479, 1480, 1481, 1482, 1483, 1484, 1485, 1486, 1487, 1488, 1489, 1490, 1491, 1492, 1493, 1494, 1495, 1496, 1497, 1498, 1499, 1500, 1501, 1502, 1503, 1504, 1505, 1506, 1507, 1508, 1509, 1510, 1511, 1512, 1513, 1514, 1515, 1516, 1517, 1518, 1519, 1520, 1521, 1522, 1523, 1524, 1525, 1526, 1527, 1528, 1529, 1530, 1531, 1532, 1533, 1534, 1535, 1536, 1537, 1538, 1539, 1540, 1541, 1542, 1543, 1544, 1545, 1546, 1547, 1548, 1549, 1550, 1551, 1552, 1553, 1554, 1555, 1556, 1557, 1558, 1559, 1560, 1561, 1562, 1563, 1564, 1565, 1566, 1567, 1568, 1569, 1570, 1571, 1572, 1573, 1574, 1575, 1576, 1577, 1578, 1579, 1580, 1581, 1582, 1583, 1584, 1585, 1586, 1587, 1588, 1589, 1590, 1591, 1592, 1593, 1594, 1595, 1596, 1597, 1598, 1599, 1600, 1601, 1602, 1603, 1604, 1605, 1606, 1607, 1608, 1609, 1610, 1611, 1612, 1613, 1614, 1615, 1616, 1617, 1618, 1619, 1620, 1621, 1622, 1623, 1624, 1625, 1626, 1627, 1628, 1629, 1630, 1631, 1632, 1633, 1634, 1635, 1636, 1637, 1638, 1639, 1640, 1641, 1642, 1643, 1644, 1645, 1646, 1647, 1648, 1649, 1650, 1651, 1652, 1653, 1654, 1655, 1656, 1657, 1658, 1659, 1660, 1661, 1662, 1663, 1664, 1665, 1666, 1667, 1668, 1669, 1670, 1671, 1672, 1673, 1674, 1675, 1676, 1677, 1678, 1679, 1680, 1681, 1682, 1683, 1684, 1685, 1686, 1687, 1688, 1689, 1690, 1691, 1692, 1693, 1694, 1695, 1696, 1697, 1698, 1699, 1700, 1701, 1702, 1703, 1704, 1705, 1706, 1707, 1708, 1709, 1710, 1711, 1712, 1713, 1714, 1715, 1716, 1717, 1718, 1719, 1720, 1721, 1722, 1723, 1724, 1725, 1726, 1727, 1728, 1729, 1730, 1731, 1732, 1733, 1734, 1735, 1736, 1737, 1738, 1739, 1740, 1741, 1742, 1743, 1744, 1745, 1746, 1747, 1748, 1749, 1750, 1751, 1752, 1753, 1754, 1755, 1756, 1757, 1758, 1759,**





SPORTS BOOKS 32

Honest account of Adams's life and times is required reading

SPORT

TUESDAY DECEMBER 22 1998

FOOTBALL 36

Is South Africa's bid for the World Cup in 2006 a credible one?

Suspended striker delays return Di Canio puts Wednesday career at risk

By RICHARD HOBSON

THE future of Paolo Di Canio is cloudier today than at any time during a volatile career with Sheffield Wednesday after Moreno Roggi, his lawyer, suggested yesterday that the player may continue to defy the club by delaying a return to England from Italy until the new year.

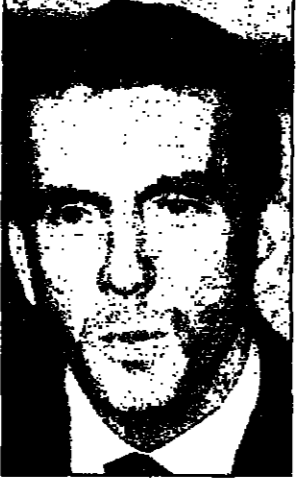
An 11-match ban imposed by the Football Association after Di Canio pushed Paul Alcock, the referee, to the ground during a tempestuous FA Carling Premiership game against Arsenal three months ago has now expired. However, Di Canio claims that he is suffering from stress and depression and possesses a medical certificate, signed by an Italian doctor, which is valid until January 4.

himself to the club immediately after the FA disciplinary commission imposed the ban in October and again at a press conference called to mark his return to training at the end of last month. On both occasions he emphasised a desire to play against Leicester City on Boxing Day.

According to sources in Italy, though, he is concerned at the treatment he might receive from referees in England, many of whom felt that the punishment meted out by the FA did not match the seriousness of the offence. He also feels that Wednesday should fly a medical team to his family home in Terni, 60 miles north of Rome, if they want to corroborate the findings of the Italian doctors.

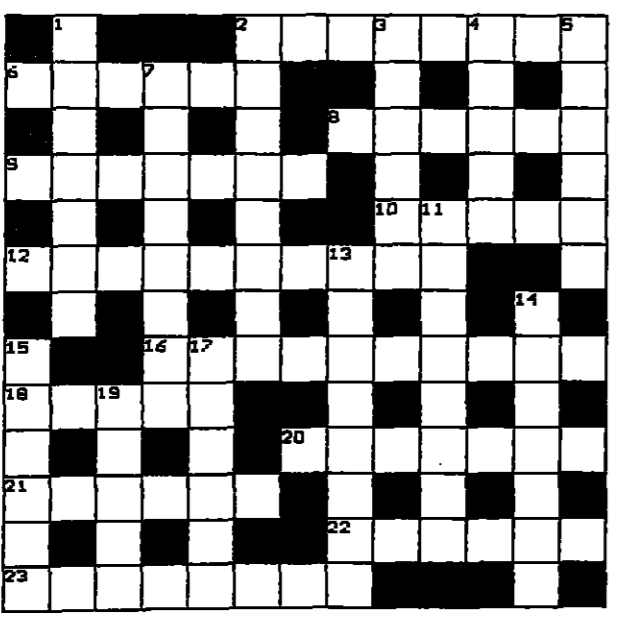
Brendan Basson, the deputy chief executive of the Professional Footballers' Association, believes it is in Di Canio's best interest to return. "If he has differences to sort out then he needs to be talking to the club," Basson said.

A Premier League hearing to discuss Di Canio's appeal will not be convened until the new year. He has already been fined four weeks' wages by Wednesday - a total of around £68,000 - as well as £10,000 by the FA. With legal costs touching £12,000 the cost of his action will reach £124,000 if the League find against him.



Di Canio, depressed

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD

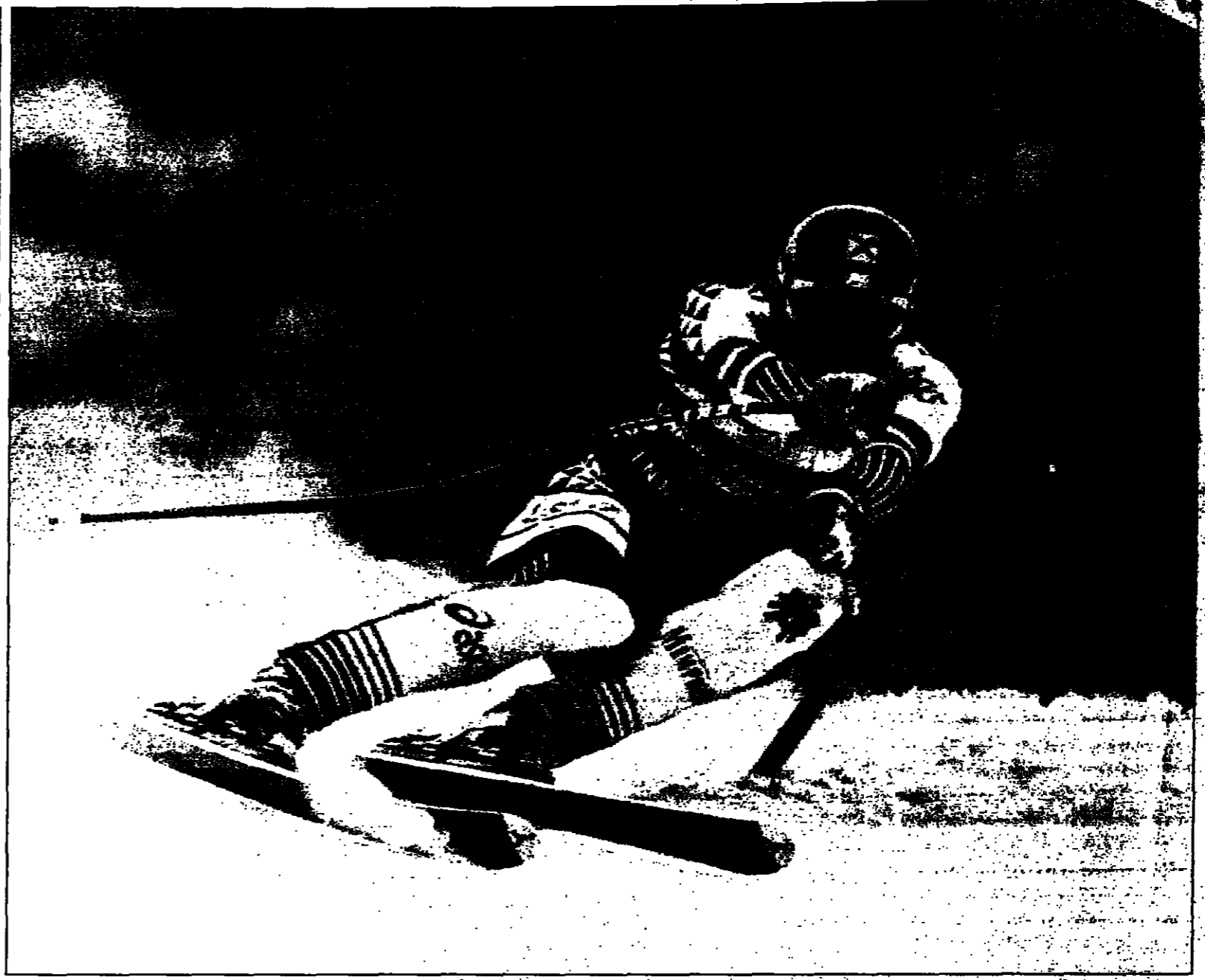


No 1595

- ACROSS 2 Ignore (4,4); Jewish festival (8) 6 Harsh, painful; a drink (6) 8 Tricked by practical joke (6) 9 Prefect; studio TV (7) 10 Grasping, lifting tool (5) 12 Aggressive patriotism (10) 16 Irregular (10) 18 Grow-up (5) 20 US grasslands (7) 21 Roman army unit host (6) 22 Rich merchantman (arch., poet) (6) 23 Toulou (8) DOWN 1 Disciple of Paul; a grass (7) 2 Relative importance (8) 3 Plays; creatures not bred true (6) 4 Fox's mate (5) 5 Pungent salad root (6) 7 Court; board of inquiry (8) 11 Leaving out (8) 13 Deathless (8) 14 Most insignificant (7) 15 Colourless (6) 17 Comedian's straight man (6) 19 Strong promptings (5)

SOLUTION TO NO 1594 ACROSS: 1 Canyas 5 Hush 8 Bang 9 Gobbling 10 Come true 11 Thaw 12 Hearth 14 Troths 16 Flit 18 Pristine 20 So-called 21 Abut 22 Herd 23 Dilate DOWN: 2 A la mode 3 Vague 4 Sugar the pill 5 Holster 6 Santa 7 Absent-minded 13 Rutland 15 Banquet 17 Loose 19 Trail

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Maier attacks a gate in typically determined style on his way to victory in the super giant slalom yesterday, to be followed home by eight team-mates

Maier leads unprecedented sweep

HERMANN MAIER led the Austrian team into the history books yesterday with an unprecedented sweep of the first nine places in a World Cup super giant slalom at Innsbruck. Maier, a double Olympic champion at Nagano, emerged victorious at the famous Patscherkofel Olympic course, then his teammates helped to restore the prestige of Austrian skiing in distinguished fashion after recent setbacks.

team. We need more races like this. The course was perfect, and the fans gave me a big boost. I just wanted to win here. This race was very special to me." Never in World Cup history had skiers from the same country finished 1-9 in men's or women's races. The previous best team showing dated back to 1968, when French women filled the first six positions in a downhill race at Abetone, Italy. Austrian skiers had already swept the top five places in a super giant slalom at Aspen, Colorado, last month.

Maier recorded a time of 1min 23.52sec down the 1,947-metre course, dropping 570 metres. Christian Mayer and Fritz Strobl were placed second and third respectively in the third super giant slalom race of the season, Mayer trailing the winner by 0.76sec and Strobl one-hundredth of a second further back.

Stephan Eberharter, who finished fourth, Rainer Salzgeber (fifth) and Hans Knauß (sixth) were also split by just one-hundredth. The race, which began 65 minutes late after fog had hampered visibility, looked like the Austrian national championships at late starters such as Patrick Wirth and Werner Franz helped to set up the record-breaking finish.

Lasse Paulsen, of Norway, was the first of the non-Austrian finishers in tenth place, with a gap of 1.01sec. Maier's third victory of the season, the thirteenth of his World Cup career, put the strongly built Austrian competitor on top of the overall standings. With 540 points after 12 races, Maier took over the leadership by three points from Lasse Kjus, of Norway, who slipped to second place as he could only finish in fourteenth place in the race yesterday. Mayer moved into third place with 462 points, ahead of Eberharter. Maier, the defending World Cup overall champion, super giant slalom and giant slalom champion, also claimed a commanding lead in the super giant slalom standings. The Austrian favourite could only finish fourth in the two previous races, behind Gardena and Alta Badia, had to turn around to avoid a spill in mid-course when he hit the snow with a hand as he struggled to clear a gate. Strobl, who was placed third starting with the No 45 bib, said the success "took a lot of pressure out of us". He added: "Third place also gives me a lot of morale for coming races. We certainly have the best super giant team." The men's World Cup continues at Bormio, northern Italy, a week from today. The Austrians will be aiming for their first downhill victory in the fourth speed race of the season, after six wins in the three other disciplines of Alpine skiing.



History makers: the record-breaking Austrian skiers look forward to a night of celebration

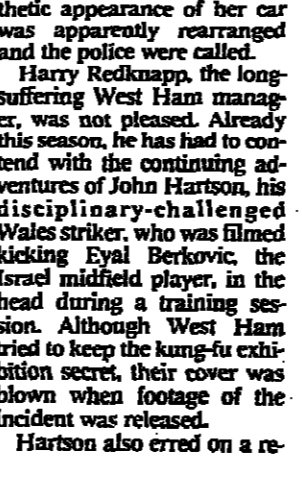
Redknapp ready to read riot act

Drinks, cars, footballers... a heady cocktail of alcohol, speed on wheels and trendy young professionals with money to burn. It frequently ends in tears and often in the courts, as Neil Ruddock and Trevor Sinclair, the West Ham United players, a youth worker who is believed to be a friend of Sinclair, are said to have become involved in a disagreement with a teenage beauty therapist. The aesthetic appearance of her car was apparently rearranged and the police were called.

Ruddock, 30, is charged with affray and Sinclair, 25, with criminal damage after an alleged incident involving a girl in a mini - a small vehicle, not a dress - outside a nightclub in Essex on Saturday night. The former England players had earlier attended a Christmas party at a nearby wine bar. Spirits were high, after the FA Carling Premiership club's 2-1 victory against Everton, in which Sinclair had scored, that afternoon. The onset of yuletide celebrations and fancy-dress attire from the Seventies - flared trousers and kipper ties were mandatory - added to the festive cheer.

Russell Kempson reports on more off-field problems for West Ham. Redknapp, who is likely to fine his miscreants if they are found guilty, responded to the latest episode with all the weariness of a father tired of the childish pranks of his youngsters. "I told them to enjoy themselves and to make sure they behaved," he said yesterday. "It appears that they've got themselves into a lot of trouble. If that's right, then you can be sure I'll read them the riot act."

Sinclair is not noted for his extra-curricular activities, but Ruddock's past could be best described as 'chequered'. Although not particularly ashen-faced, Sinclair and Ruddock had nothing to say for themselves at West Ham's training ground at Chadwell Heath yesterday. They readily signed autographs for the many children who had waited for them, perhaps oblivious to their heroes' alleged nocturnal exploits, before taking their leave. Judging by Sinclair's silly headgear - a deerstalker hat - they might have had another fancy-dress party to go to.



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